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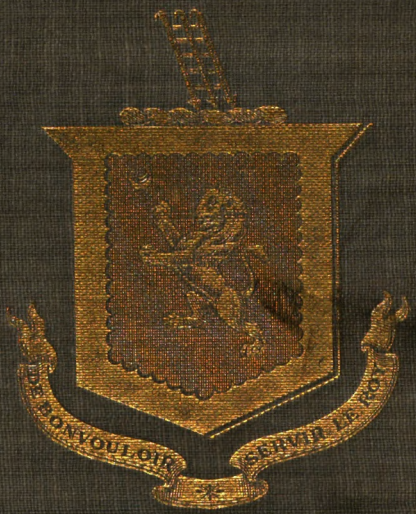

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MEMOIR

OF

SIR GEORGE GREY

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...Richmond ...

MEMOIR

OF

SIR GEORGE GREY

BART., G.C.B.

BY

M. Mandell CREIGHTON, D.D. OXON. AND CANTAB.

LATE VICAR OF EMBLETON AND CANON OF NEWCASTLE, ETC.
AND BISHOP OF LONDON

Reprinted from the Edition privately printed in 1884

WITH PREFACE BY

SIR EDWARD GREY, BART., M.P.

AND PORTRAITS

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1901

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PREFACE

THIS Memoir was written immediately after my grandfather's death by the late Bishop of London, who was then Vicar of Embleton. The work was undertaken by him at the special request of those who were most attached and most nearly related to Sir George Grey, and it was in accordance with their desire that it was privately printed and sent to near relations and intimate friends. They felt for the Memoir the greatest appreciation and gratitude, and to my grandmother especially, who survived my grandfather for eleven years, it gave much satisfaction and comfort.

It had been in contemplation that at some later time the book should be published; and the hope had been that this would be done

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under the supervision of Bishop Creighton himself, but in 1884, the year in which the Memoir was completed, he left Embleton, and the years which followed brought, as in the Church they always must bring to men of his great capacity and earnestness, a great and increasing burden of work. For him the time of leisure, in which it would have been reasonable to ask him to review the Memoir and decide upon its publication, never came. It is now published as it stands, in the expectation that such a sympathetic appreciation of the life and character of a statesman of the last generation will have a permanent interest.

Little is required or would be appropriate by way of preface. There is nothing which any of those who knew Sir George Grey best would wish to alter; there is no doubt much which might be added, if it were intended to write a full biography; this book, however, was not meant to be a biography, but a portrait of character and personality. As such it is completely successful, and for another hand to add personal touches, however true, would be not

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to improve but to confuse the impression left by the Memoir as it is.

If additions were to be made either from the personal or the political point of view, Lord Northbrook would be best able to make or suggest them; the question has been considered by him, and it is his opinion, founded upon a more intimate personal knowledge of Sir George Grey, and a longer and closer experience of his political life, than any of his relations and friends who are now living, that as a personal sketch the Memoir is so perfect as it stands, that it is best to leave it untouched.

In this I entirely concur, and I shall not attempt in this preface to do more than to explain how it was that Mr. Creighton (as he was at that time) was asked to write the Memoir, and why it is that all who shared my grandfather's home have felt very special satisfaction and gratitude that the work was done by him.

Mr. Creighton came as Vicar to Embleton in 1875, and his acquaintance with my grandfather began in that year, a few months after

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the death of my father. The way in which that great calamity was met, and the description of the years of home life which succeeded, are founded upon a knowledge and friendship far more intimate than can be gathered from the words of the Memoir itself. Mr. Creighton has kept himself entirely in the background; but during those years his presence came to be amongst the best known and most constant and valued incidents at Fallodon. Embleton was but two miles distant, and he and Mrs. Creighton came constantly to Fallodon, and brought into my grandfather's life a new friendship, which gave interest and freshness to all its last years. Those years were spent by Sir George Grey in retirement at home. He took no part in public life outside, but read new books and followed all that happened with undiminished interest in people and things, observing everything with that wisdom which can only be attained by a pure nature after a long and full experience of life and of affairs.

Mr. Creighton came to Embleton with the

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world still before him, keenly interested in literary work, but equally so in all matters of practical life, and especially in people, with a mind wonderfully alert and vigorous, and with an earnest desire to make the very utmost of all new experience, and to do the best work. Intercourse between two such minds so situated meant much to each of them; it could not be otherwise, and from this there soon came that personal respect and sympathy which made the society of each easy and delightful, as well as interesting to the other. We all felt that there was something of rare quality in this intimacy. The keen interest with which my grandfather talked with Mr. Creighton was apparent to all of us and impressed us; we felt how real it was, and there were many little traits which told much. I can well remember the quick expression of pleasure which came upon my grandfather's face when someone exclaimed, as often happened when we were all in the drawing-room together, that Mr. Creighton had just passed the windows on his way to the entrance door.

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We were conscious, too, that on Mr. Creighton's side there came to be an esteem and affection for Sir George Grey which made us sure that he also received great pleasure from the intimacy; but of what this was to him, Mrs. Creighton, who is to write his life, can tell best. Something of it we felt reflected in the sympathy, the advice, the encouraging help, and the friendship which he gave to us all at Fallodon, and continued to give afterwards. The Bishop had a wonderful power of bestowing this, and we always felt that it came to us touched with emotion by the memory of my grandfather.

It may perhaps strike readers of this Memoir that it must have been difficult for Mr. Creighton, without an inside experience of political affairs, to give a just account of Sir George Grey as he was in political life and in full work. It is true that my grandfather never dwelt at all in conversation upon his own part in public affairs, and that 'in private life he talked on political questions as an ordinary well-informed man,' not as one 'who had

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been familiar all his life with the questions under discussion'; but to a keen and large mind, like Mr. Creighton's, the summing-up of the life's work was apparent in the whole character and point of view of the conversations; he knew what Sir George Grey had done, and he understood how he had done it, and the influence he had exercised upon affairs, by seeing him as he was. Insight into character is a sure guide in understanding the full meaning of what is related by contemporaries or to be found in written or printed records; constant intercourse with one whose faculties are unimpaired, and whose judgment has been matured and character developed by a long life of consistent work, throws a clear light upon the past. Such intercourse Mr. Creighton enjoyed most constantly in the last years of Sir George Grey's life; his own sympathies and his outlook upon men and affairs were so full and broad, that by this light he could not fail to understand, to judge, and to appreciate the whole life; and thus the Memoir was written, the political part as well

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as the description of the home life, not only with knowledge, but with insight.

To us the book has a double value, for the sake of the subject and for the sake of the author. My grandfather made for his family the happiest home that could be, and he left us an example of character the force of which has not been weakened by lapse of time, but has developed and matured as fuller experience of life has come to us since his death. Bishop Creighton, too, has left us a personal influence which will be cherished with gratitude as long as we live.

EDWARD GREY.

FALLODON: *September*, 1901.

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One who long time has sojourned over seas,
Until by traffic he has gained good store,
Returns again unto his native shore,
But finds men strange and alien ; till he flees
And seeks his humble birth-place. There he sees
Nought save a desolate garden, and the hoar
Wreck of a crumbling house ; but his heart's core
Fills with new life 'mid wakening memories.

So may these pages serve to overtake
The rush of time, and gathering clouds dispel,
Bidding the fulness of the past awake,
Recalling life beyond the life they tell ;
Themselves unworthy, worthy for the sake
Of one whose faintest image is a spell.

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MEMOIR

OF

SIR GEORGE GREY

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE AND EARLY YEARS, 1799–1832

THE family of Grey has been for centuries connected with the course of English history, and is especially famous in the annals of the Border warfare. As times grew more quiet, the Grey family pursued, with equal zeal, the occupations of peace. The stock was numerous, and spread on many sides. The Greys of Howick separated, in the sixteenth century, from the Greys of Chillingham and Warke. In 1720, Sir Henry Grey, of Howick, married the daughter of Thomas Wood, of Fallodon, and that estate passed to their descendants.

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The house of Fallodon had no claims to magnificence. It was a comfortable country house, well situated amongst undulating country, which afforded picturesque slopes for garden ground. The gardens at Fallodon were famous in 1730, when it was said 'there are produced here good Peaches, Plumbs, and Pears in as great variety and perfection as in most, if not any, Places in the South.' Northumberland is not renowned for the beauty of its domestic architecture. In early days it needed castles and towers of defence, which in more peaceful days either fell into ruins or were clumsily incorporated into dwelling-houses. The country houses of Northumberland are either of this hybrid kind or are comparatively modern buildings. Fallodon is amongst the oldest of the modern houses, and is almost the only building of any size in North Northumberland which is built of red brick. Girt about by trees, well sheltered from the east winds, with a pleasant prospect over a wooded park, it is an agreeable and unpretentious residence. From the upper windows there is a fine view,

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through the trees, over the sea, which lies some three miles distant.

The neighbourhood of the sea was probably grateful to the next occupant of Fallodon, Charles, fourth son of Sir Henry Grey. He had been a soldier in his youth, and carried arms at the age of nineteen. After distinguishing himself in the fruitless war against the American colonies, he returned to Fallodon and lived happily amongst his children. When war was declared against France, he was put in command of the forces which sailed to the West Indies in Sir John Jervis' fleet. His services met with due recognition. His elder brothers died without issue, and he succeeded to the chief estate of the Grey family at Howick. In 1801 he was created Baron Grey of Howick; in 1804 he was further raised to the dignity of Viscount Howick and Earl Grey.

The name of his eldest son, Charles, the second Earl Grey, is indissolubly connected with one of the most memorable periods of English history. The second son, Henry, who

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succeeded to the Fallodon estate, entered the army, where he saw much active service, and rose to the rank of general.

The third surviving son, George, entered the navy and served with distinction during a period of constant warfare. He was the favourite captain of Sir John Jervis, and was constantly associated with him in his naval exploits. In June, 1795, Captain Grey married a wife who did not shrink from sharing the perils of his adventurous life. He married a lady remarkable in many ways—Mary, the daughter of Samuel Whitbread, of Bedwell Park, in Hertfordshire.

The Whitbreads were a respectable Bedfordshire family which had long been settled at Cardington. Samuel Whitbread was the youngest of five sons, and had to make his way in the world. Raising with difficulty a capital of £2,000, he began trade as a brewer, and abundant success rapidly crowned his energy. 'Whitbread's Brew-house' was famous, and Samuel Whitbread became one of the wealthiest men in England. He himself was

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surprised at his good fortune, and accepted it as a trust from on high. 'As it hath pleased God,' he writes, 'to bless me with good abundance, who went out, as Jacob said, "with my staff only," I have all along thought it my duty to show some token of gratitude to Almighty God, who maketh poor and maketh rich, by improving the place I was born in and the parish wherein our family have lived a hundred-and-fifty years.' Accordingly he bought land and improved it to the utmost of his power. He built new houses, made roads, erected bridges, repaired churches, and instituted public charities of every kind. He regarded this as his duty, and set apart a large portion of his income for such purposes. His daughter writes of his private life:

He avoided all parade and show, and never could bear any appearance of wealth beyond what was requisite for use and comfort. He used to say that a tenth of every man's income was not his own, and should be given away; but in his own bounty he had no restrictions. He liked to have everything good but no profuseness. He laid out his money in land and liked to purchase in his own county, Bedford-

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shire. He was a regular member of the Established Church, but often went to Dissenting meetings at watering places. He used to lament the want of good clergymen, often saying it had been his lot, both in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, to have only bad ones. Amidst a life of peculiar activity and attention to business, he always retired for prayer and reading the Scriptures. I owe more than I can express to his rigid moral and religious example and character.

The upright and simple piety of Samuel Whitbread may be still further shown by an extract from his papers:

I must humbly acknowledge with grateful heart the goodness of God, showed to me, an unworthy servant, in blessing my labours abundantly through a long course of years, with great increase, year by year, almost beyond example; and it was not acquired by the Public Funds, or contracts with Government, or speculations, or legacies, but by fair trade only. Lord, what shall I render? 'Thou art my God and I will praise Thee.' And, indeed, I may say with David, 'Who am I, Lord, and what is my house that Thou hast brought me hitherto?' And I pray God to establish and continue to help my house, and the house of my fathers, that His name may be magnified among them for ever. Amen.

Samuel Whitbread was twice married. By

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his first wife, Harriet Hayton, he had a son and two daughters. After her death he married, in 1769, Lady Mary Cornwallis, youngest daughter of Charles, Earl of Cornwallis, and sister to the Marquis of Cornwallis, famous as Governor-General of India. Lady Mary Whitbread is described by her husband as 'a woman of unblemished integrity of heart, of a fine understanding, of generous and free disposition, beloved by them that knew her well beyond example. She was a Christian, really and truly; and was good in doing good, in which she chiefly placed religion. She was very tender and compassionate to the afflicted and poor, and was most humble. She had an excellent judgment of persons and things, and her advice was scarcely ever wrong placed.' Her virtues, however, did not long gladden her husband. She died in childbirth in December, 1770.

Samuel Whitbread has left a touching description of her sayings and doings during the few days before her death. She suffered with Christian resignation, and spent her hours

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of respite from pain in thought for others. She gave directions that her infant daughter should be called Mary, and arranged her sponsors. She charged her husband to see that the child had a good education, and that great care was taken of her morals, 'but did not wish or desire her to have a large fortune.' Affluence, she said, was not necessary. Again she said, 'Make her a good woman, and give all your children a good education that will avail them.' She bade farewell to all her relations and friends, and sent loving messages to those who were absent. She gave directions about her funeral, enjoining strict simplicity. She chose the place of her burial; 'and a plain remembrance to be put up in the church: no stuff on it, no parade,—none—only plain.' She desired that her body should be dissected after death, 'if it was of any service to any other poor mortals,'—which was done. Then she besought her husband to allow no mournful recollections to cluster round the house in which she died. 'She feared I should now sell Bedwell, but wished me to take time, and not to

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hurry myself.' Then, as she felt her weakness increasing, she dismissed her husband, saying, 'You must now take your leave of me. You must! It is too much for you to see me die.' No wonder her physician said that he never saw so much fortitude before. Her husband's simple narrative gives an impression of a strong yet gentle character, which owed its charm to the influence of genuine religious feeling. Husband and wife alike were endowed with strong common-sense and were possessed of great practical capacity. To both, religion lent dignity and grace.

The daughter, whose life had been purchased by the sacrifice of her mother's, was carefully brought up by her father, who was fifty years old at her birth. She inherited the decided character of her mother, and was taught to revere her memory. She imbibed the religious teaching of her father. It grew with her growth and became the chief feature of her life. She impressed it upon her husband, and upon her children in a marked manner. Seldom can there be traced a group

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of three generations, all the members of which display the same entire devotion to the pursuit of righteousness. The root of the deeply religious feeling and high moral principle, which was the centre of Sir George Grey's character, is to be found in the influences of his home life.

Captain Grey's sister, Lady Elizabeth, married in 1788 the only son of Samuel Whitbread, and the intercourse thus created led to the marriage of Captain Grey and Mary Whitbread on June 18, 1795. There was scanty time for their honeymoon, as Captain Grey had orders to sail from Portsmouth on July 8. It needed no ordinary fortitude to marry a naval officer in those stirring times. During the first years of their married life, Mrs. Grey saw her husband only at rare intervals. In 1797 was fought the famous battle of St. Vincent, in which Captain Grey greatly distinguished himself. In 1798 Mrs. Grey resolved to share more closely her husband's adventurous life, and accompanied him to Gibraltar, which was the headquarters of the Mediter-

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ranean fleet. She had a perilous beginning to her sojourn, as she landed in an open boat, and was greeted by the fire of the Spanish gunboats. In this peril she showed great calmness. The need of wrestling with constant anxiety about her husband had taught her fortitude and self-restraint. She resolutely set her face to do her duty, and was a help, and not a hindrance, to her husband. Her own experience of the struggle needed to conquer self and put duty in the foremost place, strengthened her character and enabled her to be a useful counsellor to her sons.

It was during her residence at Gibraltar that Mrs. Grey's elder son, George, the subject of this memoir, was born, on May 11, 1799. At the end of that year, the Earl St. Vincent, as Sir John Jervis had now become, returned home, broken in health. He wrote to the First Lord of the Admiralty—'In the state I am in, Captain Grey is essentially necessary to my comfort, and I hope that your Lordship will approve of his accompanying me.' So Captain Grey came back to

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England to tend his old commander. In the spring of 1800 Lord St. Vincent's health was restored, and Captain Grey again put to sea as captain of the flagship. At the beginning of the short peace in March, 1801, he accepted the command of one of the royal yachts at Weymouth, and did not again see active service. In 1804 he was appointed Commissioner (or, as it is now called, Superintendent) of the Dockyard at Sheerness, and in 1806 was removed to the same office at Portsmouth. In 1814 he was made a baronet in recognition of his services. He remained in his office at Portsmouth till his death in 1828.

On taking up their residence at Portsmouth, Commissioner Grey and his wife devoted themselves to good works. The strong character of the wife deepened the seriousness of the husband, and both of them, in their respective spheres, pursued a course of Christian philanthropy. Experience had shown them the grievous neglect of religion and morality which prevailed in the navy, and they set to work to make things better. The work of missions to

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seamen, which has made such advances in the present day, was practically begun by Commissioner and Mrs. Grey. Amongst those employed in the dockyard, and amongst the sailors and soldiers who embarked for foreign service, they were active for good. Stores of Bibles and other books were sent out on board the ships; sick sailors were cared for, and orphans were befriended. The Commissioner's house at Portsmouth was a centre of benevolent activity.

The religious views of Commissioner and Mrs. Grey were strongly evangelical, and they numbered amongst their friends William Wilberforce, Charles Simeon, and the chiefs of the evangelical party. They did not think it wise to expose their sons to the temptations of a public school. Their elder son, George, was committed at the early age of eight to the care of an evangelical clergyman, the Rev. William Buckle, Vicar of Pyrton, near Tetsworth, who received a few pupils into his house. Mr. Buckle was a good scholar, and a man of considerable attainments. His views of life were somewhat

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rigid and severe, and would not have been acceptable to every boy of high spirits. But George Grey never seems to have felt his severity, and between him and his teacher there was mutual confidence and trust. George Grey fully understood and entered into the strong religious opinions of Mr. Buckle. They were in accordance with the training of his home life. He submitted himself readily to discipline, and pursued his studies with diligence. He formed for himself a sincere and unostentatious piety, to which he held firmly all his life. A series of letters, written from school to a younger sister, show that religious thoughts occupied the chief place in his mind during his school days. There was no breach in the harmonious development of George Grey's character. Devotion to duty, and a consistent walk with God, marked his character from his earliest to his latest days.

At the end of his eighteenth year, George Grey left Mr. Buckle's care and entered at Oriel College, Oxford, as a commoner. A memorandum by Provost Copleston is appended

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to the application for his admission: 'Excellent character for abilities, application, temper, and manners.' His residence at Oxford was in the palmy days of Oriel, when Whately, Tyler, Keble, and Hawkins were the tutors. W. Bingham Baring, afterwards Lord Ashburton, and the late Sir William Heathcote entered Oriel in the same year as George Grey. T. F. Fremantle, afterwards Lord Cottesloe, and Yarde Buller, afterwards Lord Churston, had come to Oriel in the previous year. In the following year came Charles Wood, afterwards Viscount Halifax, of whom Provost Hawkins used to say that he was 'the cleverest person' he had ever had as pupil. Besides these may be noticed, among the Oriel contemporaries of George Grey, J. S. Pakington, afterwards Lord Hampton, and Edmund Denison, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury.

In this brilliant society George Grey's interests rapidly expanded. He was always sociable and personally attractive. He had many friends, and those who have been mentioned were his companions during the greater part of his political career. But neither the

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delights of society, nor the sense of freedom, after the somewhat restricted life at Pyrton, led George Grey to idleness. He enjoyed his friends, and entered into their amusements, but he did not neglect his studies. His character was too strongly moulded to be led astray. The liberty of college life, the outspokenness of college society, did not weaken the fervour of his religious feelings. His parents and his parents' friends knew that George Grey was entirely to be trusted. William Wilberforce wrote to him in 1820, when his son Robert entered Oriel College :

> It has been, I can truly assure you, a real comfort to my mind to recollect that you were of the same college as my son Robert, and to indulge the hope, which I trust will be realized, that you will act towards him the part of a real Christian friend. I must congratulate you from my heart for the manner in which it has pleased God to enable you to stand the fiery trial of an University education, and, I trust, to come out of it unsinged.

This was high praise from one whose standard was high, and who was a keen and cautious observer of character; but it was entirely

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justified. George Grey gleaned from Oxford life and Oxford studies all that was best, and was strong in his own self-restraint.

His tutor at Oriel was the Rev. J. Endell Tyler, a man of strong sense and practical capacity: not a man to inspire new ideas into his pupils, but well qualified to guide their studies. Under him George Grey obtained a sound classical training. He was famous at Oxford for his facility in writing Latin verses. He never forgot his classics, but read them with delight to the end of his days. It cannot be said that he was penetrated by the classical spirit; but he felt the charm and felicity of expression of the classical authors. He loved literature not so much for itself as for the help which it gave in practical pursuits. His turn of mind from early years was towards actual life rather than towards speculative problems. He regarded study as the necessary equipment for action. For such a mind Mr. Tyler was an excellent tutor. Sir George Grey always retained a sincere respect for him, and saw a good deal of him in later life when Tyler was Vicar

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of St. Giles' in London. There he displayed his practical capacity by several social reforms, and the name of 'Endell Street' is an abiding record of his activity. He was mainly instrumental in having that street laid out as a means of piercing through the worst parts of his parish, and breaking up the St. Giles' rookeries. In 1848 he was of practical usefulness to his former pupil, who was then Home Secretary.

Sir George Grey, in later years, looked back with pleasure on his Oxford days, and regretted that his own busy life had separated him from many of his early friends. One of the last books he read was Mr. Mozeley's 'Reminiscences of Oriel.' The early part of the book moved him greatly by the recollections which it renewed, and he spoke with warm affection of many almost forgotten names which are there mentioned. The thoughts of the free intimacy and frankness of intercourse, which University life encourages, were fresh in his mind as one of the most precious sources of knowledge of character. He looked back

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with a mixture of pleasure and regret, that was almost poignant, on the aspirations which had then floated before himself and his companions. More valuable than the knowledge of the thought of the past was the experience of the enthusiasms of his own time.

A few letters of congratulation on his first class give an interesting picture of some of George Grey's friends, of their high principle, and of the way in which already his character impressed those around him with a sense of rectitude and sincerity. They show that a deeply religious spirit prevailed amongst this band of associates and formed the tie which held them together for their mutual good :

Ulcombe, July 12, 1821.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—I am only just returned, after a month's absence from home. One of my first and happiest works shall be to give you the congratulations of one of your most attached friends upon the honour you have done yourself, and us all, in your late splendid examination. I am delighted to see men like yourself at the top of a hill, because I am quite certain that you will give out not only a light, but a true and steady light. I like to see the world

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lift a man's head up when I am sure that his own good sense and piety will keep his heart humble. I have not time to write you a long letter; but come to Ulcombe, and I can tell you better then how affectionately

I am your friend,

SAMUEL RICKARDS.

Highbury Hill, June 25, 1821.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—Accept my best congratulations on your most triumphant success. In whatever light I look at it—whether in reference to your own dear self, or to your College, or to the principles you maintained in the University, I know not how to be most pleased, and the aggregate of delight is great indeed. Our good Thompson told me of your unbounded spirits during his visit to Oxford, and all your friends are drawing the same from you like an electric shock.

. . . . . .

Very affectionately yours,

HENRY WILSON.

Ashbourn, November 14, 1821.

MY DEAR GREY,—It has indeed given me great pleasure to think that all your attainments, and all the honest fame with which they are accompanied, will be devoted to the services of the best of Masters; and my next congratulations will, I hope, be on your having taken Orders. The little experience I

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have had convinces me that there is no employment which pays so well, in calm and solid happiness, as the care of a parish. But whatever your destination may be, I hope you will be enabled to serve God in it, and I am sure that no one ever served Him in vain.

. . . . . .

Yours very sincerely,

W. AUGUSTUS SHIRLEY.[1]

The deep strain of genuine and unostentatious piety, which is shown in these letters, proved that there existed in Oriel a spirit of sincere religion. The ecclesiastical movement, which, in a few years' time, made its headquarters in the College, was not a mere stirring of dry bones. Oxford was by no means sunk in religious apathy. There was a vigorous religious life, which aimed at personal holiness and the quiet service of God in any position in the world. This spirit, it may be admitted, was not interested in ecclesiastical organisation. It was personal and individual, and probably had no answer for the questions which soon

[1] Afterwards Fellow of New College and Bishop of Sodor and Man.

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became momentous. Its aim was the edification of the individual soul, not the organisation of the ecclesiastical community. It was satisfied with the Church of England because the Church of England satisfied the religious feelings of the majority of the people of England.

With these opinions George Grey contemplated taking Holy Orders, and so entering on a career in which he might labour for the highest interests of his fellow-men. For this purpose he studied theology for two years after taking his degree. It would seem that more mature consideration led him to think that his temperament was unsuited for the strain of parochial work. In May, 1823, he definitely abandoned his intention of taking Orders. His change of opinion seems to have been due to great conscientiousness and scrupulousness, not to any decided difficulties which he felt as to the formularies of the Church of England. He remained throughout his life a sincere and loyal member of the Church; but he always took a large and liberal view of its spirit. He was not interested in any ecclesiastical system

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as such; but he was drawn to the genuine manifestation of religious feeling in whatever form it was displayed. He came to the conclusion that he could be more useful as a layman than as a clergyman.

This change of intention did not bring with it any diminution of the religious fervour which was always the basis of George Grey's character and actions. His aim was still the same,—to labour in the service of God: it was only the exact sphere which was altered. He constantly regarded his character as formed by the grace of God working within him. His decisions were made after seeking counsel of God. His high spirits, his geniality and his vivacity, sprang from a heart which was pursuing amidst all things a consistent walk with God. His friends understood that, when he laid aside his intention of taking Orders, it was not because he had become more secular in his opinions. One of his Oxford friends writes to him in May, 1823:

> Your views in life, my dear friend, are altered. I

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will not send you cold congratulations on the change, but earnest prayers that you may be enabled by the good God (who I believe has guided your choice) to continue doing good to others, as much as you have done to me. Although your profession is not that of the Church, you have a wide field before you, in which example may operate powerfully, and induce people to accept those precepts which they might otherwise reject.

The two years thus spent in reflection and theological reading were of great value in the formation of George Grey's mind. They gave him leisure for much reading, and fixed in him a taste for literature, which is often lost by those who betake themselves too early to professional pursuits. To the last Sir George Grey was a great reader and had a special interest in theology. He always kept himself abreast of modern criticism, and at the age of eighty-two read with interest, and discussed with acumen, a book so foreign to the traditions of his early education as Mr. Robertson Smith's 'The Old Testament in the Jewish Church.'

These years were also happy years to

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George Grey in another way. He spent them mostly at home with his father and mother, to whom he was deeply attached. He was also devoted to his sisters; and, during this time of quiet, his domestic affections were still more strongly developed and became a marked feature of his character. In his busiest days Sir George Grey never forgot his home, or neglected his home duties. He threw off the pressure of public business in his own domestic circle. He found time for the scrupulous discharge of the affairs that concerned the well-being of those around him. Though he enjoyed society, he never allowed society to absorb his energies. His ease, his sprightliness, and geniality were even more conspicuous in his private life than they were in public. His own family circle enjoyed unreservedly in daily life those graces of manner which made him so popular in the House of Commons.

Moreover, at the end of 1822, George Grey spent some time in foreign travel and received the stimulus which travel never fails to give to the cultivated mind. He went

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through France and along the Riviera, where he wintered at Nice. It was shortly after his return from his travels that he definitely made up his mind to abandon his plan of taking Orders. The two years that had elapsed since he took his degree had been usefully spent. He pursued a course of study with a high object before him; he gained increased knowledge of men and affairs, and saw much of the world; and he had the background of a happy family circle, where he was useful in a thousand ways to his parents, his brother, and sisters. His knowledge, his sympathy, and his experience had harmoniously developed.

George Grey now chose a new profession. In April, 1823, he settled in London to read law, a pursuit which occupied him for the next three years. His vacations were spent in foreign travel in Switzerland and Italy. In 1826 he was called to the Bar, and his ability rapidly brought him occupation. In August, 1827, he married Anna Sophia, eldest daughter of the Right Rev. Hon. Henry Ryder, Bishop of Lichfield, son of the first Lord Harrowby.

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With his wife he lived a life of constant companionship for fifty-five years.

In the spring of 1828 George Grey's happiness was disturbed by the illness of his father, who suffered from a serious and painful affliction, which was pronounced incurable. During long months of anguish the sufferer showed unwavering patience. With touching humility he bewailed his shortcomings and committed himself to God. His times of respite from pain were spent in devotion, and his sole anxiety was for the welfare of those whom he was to leave behind. A letter of condolence from Lord Exmouth, who spoke in high terms of Sir George Grey's services in the navy, was found after his death with this endorsement: 'This kind gratifying letter was received July 21, 1828, but for fear of reviving earthly vanity was not read a second time. As, however, it may be some satisfaction to my son to have it hereafter, I leave it for him.' On October 3, 1828, he passed peacefully away.

On his father's death, George Grey suc-

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ceeded to the baronetcy. He went back to his work at the Bar, saddened, but sanctified, by the teaching of the sick chamber. Increased responsibilities towards his mother, his brother, and his four sisters were now cast upon him. The remembrance of his father's life and character was a precious heritage, to which he felt bound to contribute what he could.

The times were stirring, and the agitation for parliamentary reform was moving the country to its very foundations. Lord Grey was the champion of the popular cause, and it was difficult for one who bore the name of Grey not to be immersed in politics. Sir George Grey pursued his career at the Bar with increasing success, though a political life was more and more pressed upon him. When Lord Grey's government was formed in 1830, Lord Brougham, the Lord Chancellor, offered Sir George the post of private secretary, which was declined. In January, 1832, Mr. Charles Grant, the Colonial Secretary, offered Sir George a lucrative appointment in his own profession, the Recordership of Singapore.

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This also Sir George Grey refused. He still intended to pursue his legal career in England. But the contest over the Reform Bill was agitating the country. Political questions were everywhere rife, and Sir George Grey felt a growing interest in the problems of England's future. When the Reform Bill was passed, in June, Sir George Grey resolved to enter political life. He became a candidate for the newly-enfranchised borough of Devonport, where he was recommended to the electors by his relationship to the great Whig statesman, and by his father's connection with the interests of a dockyard port. He began his canvass for Devonport in August. His commanding presence, his genial manner, and his unaffected affability made him an excellent candidate. He was returned in December.

Sir George Grey made a considerable sacrifice in entering Parliament. He was by no means a rich man, and had just entered on a career in which his prospects were excellent. He was too young to have established himself at the Bar; and he was too single-

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minded to enter Parliament without a resolve to devote himself thoroughly to its duties. Though he did not abandon his profession, he loosened the ties which bound him to it. He had learned that he had qualities which might be useful in Parliament. He was seized with the fervour which attracts most Englishmen to public life. He frankly gave himself to his country's service, that he might do for the common good the best work that he was capable of doing.

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CHAPTER II

POLITICAL LIFE, 1833–1874

SIR GEORGE GREY entered political life in the first reformed Parliament—an assembly which marks a new epoch in the internal history of England. Many looked upon its meeting with undisguised alarm, and feared that all the traditions of parliamentary procedure would be swept away. There were many new members—many untried men. The Whig statesmen, who had conducted the struggle for reform with conspicuous moderation and excellent temper, felt that their first duty was to maintain unbroken the continuity of parliamentary life. Their opponents had prophesied that a popular basis of representation would diminish the legislative efficiency of Parlia-

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ment, and weaken the administrative strength of the Government. These prophecies must be disproved by an epoch of careful and judicious administration. It was not necessary to seek for new political ideas, or to develop far-reaching schemes of policy. There were arrears of long standing to be overtaken; and the details of the political and social organisation of England must be brought into accordance with the ideas on which the Reform Bill rested. The progress of legislation had been checked by the long period of the war with France, the disorganisation of commerce, and the absorbing struggle for parliamentary reform. During this period of comparative inactivity, many questions had ripened for solution, and the work of Parliament was tolerably well defined. There was no need of constructive statesmanship, but there was great need of administrative capacity.

This situation of affairs presented itself to Sir George Grey's mind, and he frankly accepted it. The original idea with which he approached politics remained foremost in his

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mind throughout his life, and moulded his political character. He was above all things an administrator, seeking the work that had to be done and doing it efficiently. He was willing that the motive power in politics should come from others: when work was to be done, he was ready to do it. He entered Parliament at a time when it was necessary to carry out wisely and quietly many things that had been already sufficiently discussed. During his entire career, he was more interested in the practical application of principles which he approved, than in the search for new problems. It is the great credit of the Whig party that they set themselves to carry out in every branch of administration the ideas which prompted the Reform Bill, and that they did so with patient sagacity and untiring zeal.

The first question with which Lord Grey's Government had to deal was the condition of Ireland. O'Connell had set on foot an agitation for the repeal of the Union: there was much agrarian discontent, and outrages consequently prevailed. The Government brought

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in a Bill for the Suppression of Disturbances, which certainly did not err on the side of weakness. It was justified by the lawlessness of the country, where nine thousand crimes of personal violence and destruction of property had been committed during the previous year. The Bill empowered the Lord-Lieutenant to forbid objectionable meetings, and to introduce martial law into proclaimed districts. Then, as always, it was abhorrent to the feelings of very many men in Parliament to pass a Bill which interfered with personal liberty. It was only to be defended on the ground of necessity; and there was no escape from its recognition. In the impassioned debate which marked the first reading of the Bill, Sir George Grey made his maiden speech on March 1. He spoke with transparent simplicity and the ingenuousness of deep feeling. He regretted the necessity for this stringent Bill; but he felt that the bloodshed in Ireland would rest on their heads if they refused to strengthen the hands of the Government in putting down crime. It was said that English members were ready to

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apply to Ireland measures which they would not dream of applying to England. He could only say that, if a similar state of things existed in England, he would support similar remedies. He deprecated inflammatory speeches on so serious a matter. 'Ministers undertake a fearful responsibility; but I believe that they are aware of its extent and are prepared to incur it.' It was not the speech of a great orator; but it was the utterance of a mind actuated by integrity of purpose in the midst of a conflict of feelings.

Sir George Grey showed no anxiety to enhance at once the reputation which his first speech gained for him. He did not speak again during the Session of 1833, and only twice addressed the House briefly in 1834. It is noticeable that the matters which chiefly interested him were those concerning religious equality. A measure for allowing Dissenters to perform marriages in their own chapels with their own rites, was introduced by Lord John Russell. Sir George Grey supported this Bill on the broad ground that it was 'the first step

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towards concession to Dissenters of their just claims.' He strove throughout his whole career to allow every form of religious zeal to work unimpeded by restrictions. He did so, not from any motives of political expediency, but because he believed religion to be something higher than ecclesiastical systems. Different systems, he held, commended themselves to different minds; and whatever he himself might think about them, he judged that the cause of religion was best promoted by allowing all systems to work unrestrained.

In 1834 Lord Grey resigned the office of Premier, and was succeeded, on July 18, by Lord Melbourne. Parliament had but a short time to sit, and on its prorogation Sir George Grey went to Paris for a holiday. While there he was surprised by the offer of the post of Under-Secretary for the Colonies; the Secretary of State being Mr. Charles Grant. For a time he hesitated. He was making a considerable income at the Bar, and could ill afford to sacrifice a career in which success seemed well assured. By accepting office he would defi-

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nitely abandon the Bar, and commit himself to the uncertainties of official life. Though he had not sat long in Parliament, he had shown the qualities necessary for an administrative career. After mature deliberation he chose the sphere of wider usefulness. He did so contrary to the advice of his legal friends; and he did so with the knowledge that he was sacrificing his own pecuniary interests. He knew that he was choosing the more difficult path, in which the burden of responsibility was greater, and the worldly gain was less. How his friends regarded this step may be seen by an extract from a letter of Lord Grey to his mother, the Dowager Lady Grey, in December, 1836:

> George is establishing a high character, both in his office and in Parliament; and you have every reason to be proud of him. His health, I trust, will stand the fatigue which a conscientious feeling of duty will impose upon him more than on others. But the trade of politics, always a bad one, is now worse than ever; and I cannot help regretting that he left a profession which afforded so much better prospects, and in which he might have looked to the highest distinction.

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Sir George Grey entered upon the work of his department with such zeal that his health began to suffer almost immediately. He had naturally a nervous, sensitive, and impressionable temperament, and had to learn by experience how to bear the responsibility and anxiety of office. He schooled himself in time to recognise the limits of human forethought and human industry; but it required a strong and decided effort. He was regarded in later life as a cool and clear-headed official; but he had to train himself diligently for this purpose. It was by no means a natural gift. He was naturally quick and impulsive, and the qualities which distinguished him as an administrator were the result of careful self-discipline. His first experience of official life brought on a low fever, from which he was only recovering in November, 1834, when William IV. suddenly dismissed Lord Melbourne from office, on the ground that Lord Althorp's removal to the House of Lords had irreparably damaged the position of the Government in the House of Commons. A new election took place in

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December, and Sir George Grey was again returned for Devonport.

In the struggle which rapidly ousted Sir Robert Peel from power, Sir George Grey took no part. The only thing that he did in Opposition was to move, on March 11, 1835, for a Committee to inquire into the means to stop bribery at elections. In making his motion he suggested the limitation of polling to one day instead of two, and expressed his desire to see intimidation subjected to criminal penalties. He confessed that he moved for this Committee in order that everything possible might be tried before recourse to the ballot, which Mr. Grote at that period urged with philosophic earnestness. A few days later he spoke in favour of entertaining a petition against the Chatham election, on the ground of undue interference on the part of Government officials. He spoke with reluctance, but was bound to say, from his own experience at Devonport, 'that the zeal of certain officers often outran their discretion, and that in serving the existing Government they did not

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stop to consider the freedom of those placed under them.' Nothing was done at that time to secure greater purity in election. Parliament was engaged in party warfare, which left no time for matters of detail. But Sir George Grey's Committee was one of the movements which prepared the way for the Act of 1841.

The victory of the Whigs was not long in coming. On April 6 Sir Robert Peel was driven to resign, and Lord Melbourne returned to office. Sir George Grey went back to his former place of Under-Secretary for the Colonies. But this post had become more important, as the Secretary of State, Mr. Charles Grant, was raised to the House of Lords as Lord Glenelg, and Sir George Grey was left to represent his department in the House of Commons.

His first work in a Ministerial capacity was done in such a manner as to win at once the respect of the House, and to show Lord Melbourne that he had gained a valuable colleague. One of the great achievements of the Session

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of 1833 was the abolition of slavery in the British Colonies, for which the nation had been willing to pay twenty million pounds. It was a subject which had been long and fiercely contested. There were prophecies, on the one hand, that the measure would prove mischievous to the slaves themselves and disastrous to the Colonies. There was fear, on the other hand, that the lukewarmness or negligence of officials might render nugatory the excellent intentions with which the Bill had been passed. The 1st of August, 1834, had been fixed as the day on which the negroes were to pass from a condition of slavery to one of apprenticeship. This process was watched in England by jealous eyes; indeed it was clear that the West Indian planters needed watching. The philanthropic party, headed by Mr. Fowell Buxton, were not content with the progress of affairs. On June 19 Mr. Fowell Buxton moved for a Committee 'to inquire whether the conditions of the grant of £20,000,000 for the abolition of slavery had been complied with.'

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The proposal was somewhat embarrassing. It was necessary for the Government to oppose an inquiry into a state of things that had not yet lasted ten months, and, at the same time, to assure their House of their zeal in the matter. Sir George Grey answered Mr. Buxton by a clear statement of facts. He stated the difficulties which had to be faced, and the ways in which he proposed to meet them. He gave a careful estimate of the good results which had already followed from the abolition, and expressed his own hopes for the future. His speech entirely took the House by surprise. Not only was mastery of details combined with clearness of statement, but a noble spirit of disciplined enthusiasm breathed through his words. The House was at once convinced that the management of West Indian affairs could not be in fitter hands. Doubts were dispelled, and the speeches that followed were almost confined to expressions of satisfaction. Perhaps few compliments have ever been more unreserved than that now paid to Sir George Grey by Mr. O'Connell. He

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declared himself satisfied 'not only by the propriety and accuracy of the materials of which the speech was composed, but also by the liberal spirit which pervaded and gave a character to every passage of it.' Mr. Buxton remarked that the speech of Sir George Grey 'had made a deep impression in the House,' and he withdrew his motion. Sir George Grey had shown his real character to the House, and earned its confidence.

The following letter of a friend, though a political opponent, may be taken as expressing the general feeling at the first display of Sir George Grey's power. It was addressed to Lady Grey by her cousin, Lord Sandon, afterwards second Earl of Harrowby:

Friday Night: June 19, 1835.

I cannot forbear, before I go to bed, writing you a few lines to say with what delight I, in common with the whole House of Commons, heard your husband this evening. He spoke admirably; with great self-possession though with perfect modesty; with great spirit and animation, though with perfect gentleness and playfulness, so as to show up his opponent without wounding him. He has

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ndeed earned golden opinions, and has given himself the first rank on that bench.

While I felt peculiar pleasure in listening to him and to the general expression of approbation, for your sake and his own, my pleasure was heightened by feeling that increased influence was given to an honourable and religious man, and I derived comfort on public grounds from the reflection. In these days, when influence seems so independent of character, I felt his success to be a public blessing.

It is characteristic of Sir George Grey that he did not presume upon the good opinion which he had secured on all sides. He felt that the duty of an official was to discharge faithfully the duties of his office. He had no wish to magnify himself, but devoted himself to administrative details. There were pressing questions in the Colonial Office—questions affecting the basis of the relations between England and her Colonies. Canada was divided into two provinces, each possessing representative institutions. The province of Lower Canada was dissatisfied with the interference of the English Government, and demanded more freedom in the conduct of her

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own affairs. For four years this demand was backed by a refusal to vote the necessary supplies. The Government was willing to make changes in the direction of the demands of the Colonists. But the grievances of Lower Canada were not endorsed by the province of Upper Canada, and it was not judged wise to grant demands, which were enforced by the high-handed procedure of stopping the supplies. The discontented Canadians had friends in Parliament. Sir William Molesworth, on the ground of democratic principles, favoured a complete severance of Canada from England. Mr. Roebuck, who was the agent of Canada in England, persistently fought the cause of his employers. During the Sessions 1836–38 Sir George Grey confined his speeches to Canadian affairs. He did good service to the Government by his command of details respecting the Canadian question, and by the resolute, yet moderate, way in which he enforced the wisdom of a decided attitude towards mutinous and unreasonable discontent. In December, 1837, Lower Canada rose in futile revolt, and

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on the re-assembling of Parliament in January, 1838, Lord John Russell moved the suspension of the Canadian Constitution, and announced that the Government intended to send out Lord Durham as Commissioner to settle the disturbance and to redress grievances.

The policy of the Government met with severe criticism, and in the House of Commons Sir William Molesworth brought forward a motion of want of confidence in Lord Glenelg as Colonial Secretary. On March 6 Sir George Grey delivered what was probably his cleverest speech in the House of Commons. Lord Glenelg's policy had been somewhat undecided, and his despatches were subjected to severe and, in some points, unanswerable criticism. Sir George Grey had not a very strong case for the defence; but his chivalry was enlisted in behalf of his superior, and he displayed his forensic ability in pleading for the general integrity of his purpose. He showed his skill as a debater by answering, point by point, the arguments which had been advanced during the debate; and, contrary to his wont,

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ended his speech by a vigorous attack upon Mr. Stanley, who was one of Lord Glenelg's chief assailants. For its immediate purpose the speech was admirable, and its effect on the course of the debate was powerful. It established Sir George Grey's influence in the House of Commons, and raised him to the first rank of parliamentary debaters. His extreme readiness on an emergency was recognised; but it is noticeable that he did not often choose to display it.

The motion of censure on Lord Glenelg was defeated, and for the remainder of the year Sir George Grey was again busied with the affairs of Canada. The high-handed conduct of Lord Durham was violently attacked by Lord Brougham in the House of Lords, and the Ministry were compelled to disallow an ordinance which he had issued. Lord Durham thereupon resigned his post. The Ministry were taunted with abandoning the Commissioner whom they had specially chosen, and were somewhat discredited. Other Colonial difficulties were soon felt. Several of the West

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Indian Colonies were disaffected, and Lord Glenelg's policy towards them was severely criticised. In the beginning of the Session of 1839 Lord Glenelg resigned his post as Colonial Secretary, and was succeeded by Lord Normanby. Sir George Grey did not continue at the Colonial Office under Lord Normanby; but, on February 14, was advanced to the post of Judge-Advocate-General, which made him a member of the Privy Council. Still Colonial questions chiefly occupied his attention, and in April he advocated, in the House of Commons, a measure for suspending the Constitution of Jamaica. The Bill was ultimately carried only by a majority of five; and Lord Melbourne felt bound to resign. Sir Robert Peel, however, declined to form a Ministry, unless the Queen changed her Ladies of the Bedchamber. Lord Melbourne was recalled to office, and his Ministry, as reconstituted, lasted for two years more.

The chief change in the Ministry was the transference of Lord John Russell to the Colonial Office, and of Lord Normanby to the

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Home Office. As this change seemed insufficient to strengthen a weak Ministry, Lord Howick and Mr. Wood resigned. Sir George Grey, though he retained his office, was unwilling to enter the Cabinet. The Government was not strong, and, at the beginning of the Session of 1840, Sir John Yarde Buller brought forward a motion of want of confidence. In the course of the debate Sir George Grey made a vigorous speech in defence of the policy of the Government. He ended by a vindication of Whig principles as founded on 'progressive improvement,' and sketched the lines on which progress was most sure. It is one of the few speeches in which he travelled into a consideration of general principles. His speeches, as a rule, were addressed solely to the House, and dealt strictly with the matter in hand. They were characterised by businesslike capacity rather than rhetorical skill.

Lord Melbourne's Ministry survived the Session of 1840, but fell in 1841, when Sir Robert Peel came into power. Sir George Grey took no prominent part in the debates

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about the great question which made Peel's Ministry famous—the repeal of the Corn Laws. He contented himself with criticising the minor measures of the Government, and interested himself in questions of social reform. He spoke about education, of which he was a warm advocate, and about the condition of those employed in factories. He warmly supported Lord Ashley in his attempt to limit the hours of labour to ten a day in the case of women and children. Lord Ashley wrote and thanked him heartily for his assistance, saying, 'You have done nobly: thank God for it.' Studiously fair and moderate, he always professed his entire confidence in the good sense of the working classes, at a time when their demands were often viewed with apprehension. As a private member he introduced a Bill for the Erection of Public Baths and Washhouses in Towns. This Bill afterwards became law, and conferred a great boon upon the poor.

The other questions in which Sir George Grey showed a marked interest were eccle-

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siastical—where he always took a decidedly liberal view. He was especially energetic in opposing the Ecclesiastical Courts Bill, and moved a series of amendments which aimed at the entire abolition of their jurisdiction. Similarly he supported Sir Robert Peel's proposal to make a grant to the Roman Catholics of Maynooth. The Protestant spirit of the country was deeply moved by this proposal, and petitions against it showered in from every side. There was much intemperate talking and many prophecies of evil. Sir George Grey's traditions were strongly Protestant; but his sense of justice was equally strong. He had already expressed himself boldly against the exclusive establishment of the Protestant Church in Ireland. He had advocated a larger measure of Catholic emancipation, and avowed his hopelessness of any remedies which left a crying injustice untouched. In his speech in 1845 on the Maynooth grant he said:

> It is unjust, impolitic, and unwise to disregard the opinions of the great majority of the people, and

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exclusively to maintain, in a Catholic country, a Protestant Church. . . . I do not think that we are precluded by our duty to God from contributing to the support of tenets which we may think erroneous.

Sir George Grey's action in this matter was not popular with his constituents, who loudly expressed their dissatisfaction. Some of his letters, addressed to them on this subject, show the clearness of his opinions, and the reasonable turn of his mind. To a dissenter who forwarded a petition opposing the Maynooth grant, on the ground of objection to all endowments, he replied as follows:

I fully admit the distinction between the ground taken in this and other similar petitions of objections to all State establishments of religion and that of mere opposition to Roman Catholics. On the latter ground I am happy to believe that no real difference of opinion exists between myself and many who yet object to the votes which I have given. I am as strongly attached as they are to the principles of the Reformation and Protestantism; and they are, I believe, as fully opposed as I am to the perpetuation of the injustice done to the Roman Catholics of Ireland by the maintenance of an exclusive Church Establishment in that country, opposed to the feelings and tenets of the great body of the people. I

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confess, however, that I cannot concur in the opinion that all State endowments for religion are contrary to sound Scripture. If I were convinced of this, I need not say that the question would cease with me to be one of any doubt. But I feel that this, like many other questions, has been left for the consideration and decision of different countries and governments, to be determined, not by any inflexible rule applicable to all cases, but according to the varying circumstances of each case. In America, for instance, I should be far from thinking it expedient to endeavour to adopt the principle of State endowment contrary to the habits and practices of that country. Here I should deprecate an attempt to subvert existing establishments on the general ground of their being sinful; and seeing how deeply the principle of endowment is mixed up with our institutions, it appears to me vain to expect that it can be speedily uprooted. This being my impression, I have to consider how in Ireland the admitted injustice and inequality of which the Irish people complain can be remedied. My own remedy would be to treat Ireland, as it is in point of fact, as a Roman Catholic country, and to let the people have their own Church there. On this ground I voted without hesitation in favour of the proposals that the funds required for Maynooth should be taken from the Irish Established Church. This motion was rejected, and if, on this rejection, I had opposed the further progress of the Bill, I feel that I should have lent my aid to the

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perpetuation of an injustice and inequality in the mode of treating our Irish fellow-subjects to which I could not conscientiously make myself a party.

This letter may be taken as a sample of the qualities which characterise his speeches. They never rise to fervid eloquence. They rarely enter upon general principles capable of large extension in the future. But they are distinguished by mastery of details and by sobriety of judgment. Sir George Grey never expressed an opinion upon general grounds, or pursued an assumed ideal of human society. He faced questions as they arose, and did his utmost to gain a full knowledge of actual facts before he formed his judgment. Though he abandoned the Bar at an early age, he carried into politics a mind that never forgot its legal training. He took little interest in political speculation, but regarded politics as concerned with practical questions of government. He set himself to discover, not the best possible solution, but the solution which was most likely to be attained. Before deciding on his aim, he considered the means of attaining it,

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and never asked for more than was practicable. He spared no pains in mastering a subject, and never spoke on subjects with which he was not familiar. The care which he took in forming his own conclusions made his speeches forcible, because he always had his arguments under his command, and could reproduce before others the steps by which he had himself travelled. He clearly marshalled his facts, and never overstated his case. His conclusion was always a practical conclusion; and the arguments by which it was enforced were practical arguments. His sincerity, fairness, and openness of mind at once struck his listeners, and robbed them of all suspicion.

On the principle involved in the grant to the College of Maynooth—the recognition of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland—Sir George Grey entertained the strongest and most advanced opinions. While he was in favour of upholding order in Ireland by strong measures, when strong measures were required, he was keenly alive to the justice of the Irish complaints. He regarded the existence of the

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Established Church in Ireland as an outrage on the convictions of the Irish people. He put aside all minor and technical considerations, and urged that the State had no right to maintain a system which the majority of the people did not accept. In a speech in Parliament, in 1845, he used the following forcible language:

> By an act of arbitrary and unjustifiable force, England had deprived the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland of their revenues, and had transferred them to others. By a strange misnomer they called that iniquitous proceeding the Protestant Reformation in Ireland, a country where the people still remained attached to their ancient faith. By an equally strange misnomer, by a strange contradiction in terms, they called the clergy of the reformed faith, to whom the ecclesiastical revenues of the country were transferred—they called them the Church of Ireland.

Such a statement of facts was far in advance of the historical conceptions of the time.

These years in which Sir George Grey was in Opposition were amongst the happiest of his private life. He spent much time in foreign travel, which always afforded him infinite

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delight. His interests were manifold, but what pleased him most were the beauties of nature; and his chief study was the social condition of the people amongst whom he went. His artistic sensibility was never strongly developed. He admired pictures and architecture, when they came in his way, but he did not deeply feel their power. He rejoiced in natural scenery and felt its charm as he felt the sunshine. But he did not linger over any one place, nor lend himself to any one deep impression. He was content with a sudden sense of exhilaration, and turned rapidly to a new scene and a fresh impulse. He was always accompanied in his journeys by his wife, who shared his keen enjoyment of foreign travel. It is characteristic of his attachment to his family life that, in the summer of 1844, he took, as his travelling companion, his only son, George Henry, a boy of nine years old. He was always an affectionate and devoted father, entering into all his son's pursuits, making him his companion whenever possible, treating him with a joyous frankness, and winning warm

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admiration in return. Throughout his life nothing gave him keener pleasure than the companionship of the young. His ready sympathy and his unfailing good humour made him beloved by them, and his entire simplicity of character made it no effort for him to interest both himself and them by his conversation. His readiness to feel and to express his feelings about the little incidents of private life contrasted with the caution and reserve of his public career. He had a boundless sense of fun, quick observation, and untiring interest. He would take as much pains to answer a boy's question as he would to study a political problem. There was no sense of unbending in his intercourse with those younger than himself. All was entire frankness, and he was as ready as they were to be amused or interested. 'One of my earliest recollections,' writes a lady who knew him in her girlhood, 'is the delight with which the announcement that Sir George was coming was ever hailed, and the devotion—for I can call it nothing else—which his bright and joyous presence excited in all our hearts—

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a delight only equalled by his goodness and kindness to us all in the midst of all his work.'

The year 1845 brought about a change in Sir George Grey's domestic life. By the death of his uncle, General Sir Henry Grey, he became possessor of the Fallodon estate, and entered upon the pleasures and responsibilities of a country life. Fallodon became to him a happy home, and his usefulness was for many years to be felt in its neighbourhood. But at first he scarcely had time to settle down before political questions absorbed his energies. In December, 1845, England heard with astonishment that Sir Robert Peel intended to summon Parliament early in January, to propose the repeal of the Corn Laws. Soon the news spread that there were dissensions in the Cabinet, and Lord John Russell was sent for to form a new Ministry. Sir George Grey was summoned to London to take part in the deliberations. They were long and serious, but ended in Lord John Russell declining the task. Sir Robert Peel succeeded in passing the repeal of the Corn Laws; but his Govern-

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ment was so weakened that in June, 1846, he resigned. Lord John Russell succeeded him, and Sir George Grey was chosen for the onerous office of Home Secretary, a post which he held with slight interruption for nearly twenty years, and which he made his own as few Ministers have ever done.

It is almost needless to point out that the Home Office entails a more constant responsibility than any other post—a responsibility, moreover, which affords few opportunities for any great display. The pressure of the work of other departments of Government may be greater on emergencies; but it is not so continuous. The proceedings of other Ministers are only subjected in their details to critics with special knowledge, and only attract general attention on occasions. The business of the Home Office is concerned with matters of which every one supposes himself to be a competent judge. Its affairs are conducted in full publicity, and the voice of discontent, even about the most trivial matter, makes itself heard at once in the House of Commons.

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In the Home Office Sir George Grey found a sphere which eminently suited his peculiar gifts. Careful in action and moderate in expression, he had the qualities which are especially needed for an administrator under a constitutional Government. He inspired general confidence, both in the country at large and in the House of Commons, which he thoroughly understood. During his tenure of office it may be said that the internal administration of England was so conducted as to be a strength to the Cabinets in which he served. He never invited opposition, or exposed himself readily to attack. When questions were asked in the House of Commons, he answered them, cautiously and briefly, but always directly. He never attempted to be smart; he never tried to put down a troublesome questioner. He gave, in a pleasant way, a short, businesslike answer, which was generally sufficient. There is no word of bitterness to be found in any of his speeches, nothing which could wound an opponent or leave a sting behind.

The following sketch of Sir George Grey,

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by the pen of a political opponent, written in 1841, shows how his character disarmed all personal bitterness towards himself: [1]

He is a very superior man, whose usefulness, ability, and gentlemanly urbanity contrast favourably with the qualities of other members of his party. I speak of him in his personal capacity, with reference to his demeanour in the House, and his rank and estimation as a talking member; and I do not extend my approbation to his politics. This I can safely say, that every action and external symptom, if such inferential proofs are to be relied on, shows him to be an honest man, and to be sincere in the opinions—such as they may be—which he has taken up. I am by no means sure that I am right in attributing to him that he entertains sentiments tending towards the theory of democracy, as he is usually apt to confine himself to practical views of the questions that come before him; yet, every now and then, I have thought that I could detect such opinions oozing out unawares.

Sir George Grey is a very good debater; nay, one might almost say a powerful speaker, were it not for the extreme rapidity of his utterance, which prevents him from being sufficiently emphatic, and from duly enforcing his points upon the House. In fact, it requires a mind somewhat above the ordinary medium of House of Commons intelligence to follow his

[1] From the *Observer* newspaper.

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arguments without extreme attention. For his rapidity does not proceed from a mere superabundance of words, as is the case with many speakers on either side, but from the extreme copiousness of his ideas, which force themselves into utterance with a fluency that defies all attempts at chaining them down by the ordinary expedients of orators. His views and language are always original; evidently the coinage of his own intellect; not merely borrowed for the nonce, as those of many noted debaters are, from the political text-book of his party. They also are evidently quite spontaneous—the result of the thought of the moment. He never prepares his speeches, and they, therefore, have an air of freshness and sincerity that renders them more effective. However well chosen may be the language, or however happy the illustration, they all seem to be the offspring of the occasion; and, there being no appearance of a desire to dazzle or entrap his audience, they are more disposed to listen and more likely to be pleased. In this respect he is a superior speaker to Mr. Macaulay; for although his speeches, when read, will not compare with that gentleman's for polish and brilliancy, yet, when delivered, they are far more powerful, because they seem to come direct from the feelings, and are freed from the monotony which comes from laborious recollection. I consider Sir George Grey the most rapid speaker in the House, although Mr. Shiel generally enjoys that enviable distinction. Mr. Shiel appears to speak more

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rapidly; but after he has shot out two or three sentences, as boys shoot peas from a tube, he pauses to take breath and so loses time. Sir George Grey's style, on the contrary, is continuous; and I think he speaks more ideas than Mr. Shiel. The material of his speeches is very different from that of either Mr. Macaulay or Mr. Shiel. It consists chiefly of sound, practicable argument on the question at issue, whether it be the principles of measures or the conduct of men. He aims at none of the polished and brilliant sentence-making of the one, or the barbed-dart forging of the other; yet, without any pretension to eloquence, his language is elevated, and his style grammatical and correct, sometimes even eloquent.

His person and manners decidedly prepossess one in his favour. There is a peculiar and unusual air of good breeding and amiability about him, combined with considerable dignity. At the first glance you perceive that he is a gentleman, in mind and feeling, as well as in birth and station. He is tall—full six feet, if not more—and well, though not symmetrically, made. His face is decidedly handsome, though more in its general expression of mild manliness than in particular beauty or regularity of beauty. The complexion is somewhat of a pale olive, slightly embrowned, the hair dark, and the teeth brilliant. The forehead is high and intellectual, and the mouth very well formed, and expressive of general amiability of character, and a disposition to appreciate humour, if not to originate it. But the chief characteristic of

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the face lies in the brilliancy and intelligence of the eyes, which are dark and very capable of meaning.

In the foregoing remarks I have spoken very favourably of the personal qualities of Sir George Grey; but not more so than is justifiable, for he is a very great favourite in the House on the qualities which I have ascribed to him.

These impressions of a contemporary are borne out by reference to the pages of 'Hansard.' Sir George Grey's speeches were all of them addressed exclusively to the House of Commons, and were directed solely to the immediate question. The opinions which they express were carefully formed, and the general outline of the speech was clearly before the speaker; but the expression was left to the moment. The sentences are long, as was natural to a rapid speaker. The speeches have evidently suffered at the reporters' hands. The speaker's aim was to be clear and definite: to be convincing by an appeal to the logic of facts. The rhetorical effect lay not so much in the language as in the earnestness and vivacity of the speaker's manner. His listeners felt that he had mastered the subject, that he had

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thought out his opinion, that he was strongly convinced on moral as well as intellectual grounds. They lent themselves readily to hear the straightforward explanation of a process which they already knew to be sincere. Sir George Grey was a debater, and not an orator. He appealed to the House of Commons on practical questions, and always with effect.

Sir George Grey had an onerous task at the Home Office. The famine in Ireland required exceptional measures to meet the distress. Many questions concerning the Irish Poor Law needed consideration. The state of prisons and of secondary punishment required amendment. Sir George Grey was busily engaged in all these matters. The Convict Discipline Bill, which substituted for transportation abroad a method of employing prisoners at public works at home, was under his charge, though the principles upon which the measure was founded were chiefly due to his cousin, Lord Grey. In these measures Sir George Grey's energies were employed till the dissolution of Parliament in July, 1847.

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The dissolution brought a great change to Sir George Grey's parliamentary plans. Hitherto he had enjoyed a peaceful seat at Devonport. But his change of abode from London to Northumberland, pointed him out as an excellent candidate to the Liberals of North Northumberland. The electioneering contest, over a large and scattered constituency, in a somewhat inaccessible district, was an arduous undertaking. But Sir George Grey entered into it with thorough zest, and showed himself an excellent candidate for an uphill fight. His real geniality made the work of canvassing a pleasure to him. He enjoyed long rides over the beautiful county of Northumberland, in the companionship of his son, and used to say that he was thankful for a motive which led him to visit places, which otherwise he would never have seen. He was genuinely glad to make the acquaintance of the farmers, and learn their opinions. He could talk pleasantly with all manner of men, and gleaned much from his intercourse with them. He was moved by the warm expressions of friendliness which greeted

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him. He was glad of an opportunity which made him familiar with the actual facts of his own neighbourhood. His pleasant manner, his readiness of speech, his fine appearance, made him a universal favourite, and he thoroughly entered into the spirit of a contested election. He would say, laughingly, in his later years that personally he regretted the abolition of the hustings, and had always enjoyed the proceedings of his nomination days. His unfailing good humour, his sense of fun, his quickness at seeing the temper of the crowd, fitted him admirably to address an unruly audience; and he felt a keen pleasure in passing joyously through an ordeal before which many men quailed.

Sir George Grey had given up a secure seat at Devonport to fight an electioneering battle in North Northumberland. His success was due to his personal qualities, and he returned to the House of Commons with the lustre of having won a great victory for his party. The new Parliament was quickly summoned for business in November, 1847. There

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were many questions of pressing importance. A commercial crisis paralysed the industries of the country. In Ireland a new party had been organised, which advocated recourse to stronger measures than the 'moral force' whereby O'Connell strove to redress Irish grievances. European politics showed signs of a coming disturbance. Soon after Parliament met, Sir George Grey had to discharge the unpleasant duty of bringing in a Bill for the Prevention of Crimes and Outrages in Ireland. He did this in a speech which occupied two hours and a half, and the moderation and fairness with which he stated the facts, were recognised by the Irish members in the House. This studious moderation produced excellent fruits in the debate which followed, which was characterised by good temper and courtesy on the part of all speakers.

The year 1848 was one which severely tried the strength of the Administration. The revolution in Paris in February, and the formation of a French Republic, set an example which was largely followed on the Continent. The

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leaders of the Irish party planned an armed rising, and Mr. Smith O'Brien went to Paris to seek for French help. Seditious speeches were loudly heard in Ireland, and in England many elements of social discontent gathered together and threatened to become formidable. Monster meetings were held in many large towns to express sympathy with the French, and news of riots poured daily into the Home Office.

The discontented classes in England took as their cry 'The People's Charter,' which had been set on foot as the expression of social distress in 1838. The 'People's Charter' demanded universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, the payment of members and the abolition of their property qualification. The movement in 1839 lost itself in riots, till it gradually died away before the adverse public opinion aroused by disorderly conduct. But the general excitement of 1848 gave it new vigour, and the leaders of the movement calculated upon striking terror into Parliament by an overwhelming display of numbers. A meeting was summoned to assemble on Ken-

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nington Common on April 10, and carry to the doors of the House of Commons a petition signed by five millions of the people. Great alarm was felt in London at this announcement. News came daily of revolutions in Austria, Prussia, Lombardy, and other States. Chartist meetings were held in many parts of England. There were great apprehensions of a serious outbreak in Ireland. A false step on the part of the Government, any appearance of weakness or alarm, would have proved fatal to the peace of the country.

In this emergency Sir George Grey showed his strongest qualities—a clear, cool head, great capacity for organisation, a firm and dignified bearing, and an admirable perception of the temper of the people. In concert with the Duke of Wellington, who was Commander-in-Chief, he took measures for the preservation of public order. He aimed at making his measures effectual, with the least possible display. He trusted not so much to military force as to enlist, on the side of order, the sympathies of all classes. London was mapped out into

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districts, and the peaceable citizens were sworn in as special constables. On April 6 a notice was issued, declaring the proposed meeting to be illegal, as tending to cause terror and alarm, and calling upon all well-disposed persons not to attend it. The intention of presenting a petition to Parliament in excessive numbers was declared illegal, though the constitutional right to meet and petition was respected. A deputation from the National Convention, as the Chartist committee called itself, waited upon Sir George Grey at the Home Office. They were received by an under-secretary, to whom they stated that they would not break the peace, but that they must persevere in their intentions of meeting to petition. They were dismissed with cold civility.

Meanwhile the Government proceeded to show vigorous action in the House of Commons. On April 7 Sir George Grey introduced the Crown and Government Security Bill, which extended to Ireland the Treason Act of George III., defined sedition as 'open and advised speaking' with seditious intent, and

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ranked sedition as felony, not as treason, and therefore subject only to the penalty of transportation. In introducing this Bill, Sir George Grey quoted the language used by Mitchell at public meetings, and the writings of Mr. Duffy in the *Nation* newspaper—both of whom quoted Mr. Smith O'Brien's account of his reception in Paris, and of his hopes of help from France in case of a rising in Ireland.

Saturday and Sunday,[1] April 8 and 9, were spent by Sir George Grey in active preparation for the Chartist meeting on the 10th. Troops were brought up to London, and arrangements were made for quietly posting them so as to command the approaches to the House of Commons. Multitudes of special constables were sworn in. Their entire number reached one hundred and seventy thousand. The Chartists were reminded that they were not the English people. The forces of order were marshalled against those of disorder. The

[1] On this and on one other occasion only did he transact public business on a Sunday. Unless prevented by illness, he regularly attended church, morning and evening, usually at St. Michael's in Chester Square.

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Government appealed to the people to maintain quietness, and the people readily answered the call. When April 10 dawned, the soldiers were at their appointed stations, ready for action, but carefully hidden from sight. They were there merely as a precautionary measure. The Government trusted the care of the streets to the special constables, who had been enlisted by Sir George Grey's orders, and had received their instructions from his mouth. It is truly said by Sir Erskine May that 'the assembling of this force of a hundred and seventy thousand men was the noblest example of the strength of a constitutional government to be found in history.'

The Chartist leaders felt themselves entirely defeated. They had threatened to march to the House of Commons with two hundred thousand men, and exert overwhelming pressure on the Government. They found themselves resisted, not openly by military precautions, but by the display of the national will. The Government did not in terror resort to any repressive measures. The Chartists were free to meet and

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to petition as they chose ; but they were warned not to attempt to coerce Parliament, and their attempt at intimidation was rendered impossible. Barely twenty thousand men, instead of the threatened two hundred thousand, met on Kennington Common. When the meeting had begun, the Chartist leader, Mr. Feargus O'Connor, member for Nottingham, was quietly informed by the Commissioner of Police, that the procession to Westminster would not be allowed to pass the bridge. The effect of the announcement was calming. The Chartists were on the wrong side of the river, and could not hope to force the bridge. Feargus O'Connor invited them to disperse peacefully, and drove off, assuring them that he would hasten to the Home Secretary to lay their wishes before him. The disappointed crowd broke up, and the constables scattered them into small bodies at the bridges to prevent them from reuniting. O'Connor went to Sir George Grey, who answered that the petition would be received by the House in the ordinary way. It was carried thither in five cabs, and rigorous investi-

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gation presently proved that, instead of five million signatures, it had not two millions, and many of them bore signs of being fictitious. The movement, which had threatened to be serious, ended in ridicule.

In the House of Commons that same evening Sir George Grey moved the second reading of the Security Bill. Mr. Smith O'Brien, who had returned from Ireland, and hoped to take advantage of the Chartist demonstration, rose to oppose it. In a long and rambling speech he defended himself and denounced the Government. 'I have been called a traitor,' he said. 'I do not profess disloyalty to the Queen of England. But if it is disloyalty to profess treason to this House, and to the Government of Ireland by the Parliament of Great Britain, then I avow the treason.' He went on to denounce Lord John Russell: 'If, as regards his fellow-countrymen, he crushes all the efforts of the democracy to obtain those rights which the people of other countries have obtained, and if, as regards my country, he refuses the demand for self-

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government; if he plays towards the Government the part of Guizot and Metternich in their respective countries—then I tell him it is not I, but he and his colleagues, who are traitors to their country, their Queen, and the Constitution.' Pale with suppressed emotion, Sir George Grey rose to answer this audacious speech. With hope he had seen Mr. O'Brien rise—hope that he had some explanation to offer for his conduct, some disavowal of the charge of disloyalty. 'What, then, must now be the pain and regret with which I find him professing a lip-service allegiance to his Sovereign, while glorying in the charges levelled against himself, and accusing even the Premier of high treason?' He complained of having been called a traitor: nothing more was done than quote his own words. Sir George read the quotations once more, and proceeded with crushing irony: 'He says I called him traitor because I read those statements.' He challenged him again to disavow them. He asserted that the Government had no other wish than to see Ireland rich, happy,

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prosperous, and free: but he refused to accept Mr. O'Brien and such as he as the spokesmen of Ireland's wishes. The speech was short; but it was most effective. It was a fine example of the moral qualities which Sir George Grey so eminently possessed. He interpreted and expressed the indignation which Mr. O'Brien's utterances had created in the House. His answer was full of passionate earnestness, which was all the more forcible because it was held in due restraint. There was no display of personal feeling, no note of triumph which the events of the day might well have caused. The rebuke was dignified and courteous; the words were reasonable and moderate. There was nothing said in the heat of the moment which could impart fresh bitterness into the conflict, nothing which raised a new issue, or gave any pretence for protracting the debate. The House felt itself vindicated and recovered its balance. 'I well remember,' writes Lord Eversley in 1882, 'Sir George Grey's tall dignified figure standing on the floor of the House, and the firm and dignified

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manner of his denunciation. The House was electrified by his speech and manner, and he sat down in the midst of the applause which greeted him from all parts of the House, and which I never remember equalled on any other occasion.'

This was the highest point of Sir George Grey's administrative career. He was the most popular man in the House of Commons, and the most popular man in England. Letters of congratulation poured in from every side, and every loyal Englishman was proud of the manner in which the Government had met the rising of the revolutionary spirit. England had much to do in the future; but it had declared its preference for the way of gradual reform rather than sudden change. It was satisfied with the general character of its institutions, and believed in its capacity to amend them, after reasonable consideration, by constitutional means. The danger of an insurrection was over.

It is natural that an abortive attempt at insurrection should occupy but a small place in

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history, and that after-generations should pass it by with a smile of contempt. Preventive measures never receive so much recognition as remedial measures. The heroes of history are those who used the strong hand, not those who laboured that the strong hand should not be needed. The Chartist demonstration of 1848 is now little thought of; but it created the most profound alarm at the time; and the example of England produced a deep impression on the Continent. The insurrectionary movement was not suppressed by force; it was allowed to smoulder away before the extinguishing influence of public opinion which the Government skilfully directed against it. That this process was so securely accomplished was due to the cool head, administrative capacity, and quick intelligence of Sir George Grey. This was well understood at the time, and was never forgotten by those who lived through he crisis and felt its alarm. An old politician writes on April 10, 1883, to Lady Grey:

> This day brings your dear husband very closely to my recollection. April 10, 1848, was a most

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anxious day, and I can never forget his cheerful, calm bearing all through it; how prepared he seemed to be against any contingency; how unmoved when all London was in terror; not shrinking from any painful duty that might fall on him—quite prepared for the worst; and then, at two o'clock, how he walked amidst the crowds at Charing Cross, while the safety of London had been assured, under the blessing of God, by his wisdom and precaution.

His old tutor, the Rev. J. Endell Tyler, writing to Sir George later, in 1848, expresses the general view which subsequent reflection took of the facts of the case:

Never since the time of Demosthenes were his words more accurately descriptive of a well-timed, wise, and firm resolution of a Government than they are of your measure on the glorious 10th of April, when your prudence and firmness changed our general feeling of alarm and sad forebodings into confidence, security and thankfulness. I must only take the licence of translating *ψήφισμα* by 'the order of the Home Secretary;'

τοῦτο τὸ ψήφισμα τὸν τότε τῇ πόλει περιστάντα κίνδυνον παρελθεῖν ἐποίησεν ὥσπερ νέφος.[1]

How complete an answer to those who, after the result was known, found fault with your preparations,

[1] 'This decree caused the danger which then surrounded the city to pass away like a cloud.'

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is given by the words of Captain Cooke, 'Preventive measures are always invidious, because when most successful their necessity is least apparent.'

Sir George Grey was well satisfied that his measures should be criticised and then speedily forgotten. He acted with a deep sense of responsibility, and thought only of doing his duty without obtrusion of self. How entirely he was animated by the highest motives may be seen by the following extract from a letter to his mother, written on April 11, 1849, in answer to a letter from her on the anniversary of the day of his triumph:

I trust I do feel really thankful for the merciful Providence which directed and upheld me during that anxious time, and the peace and quiet which we now enjoy. I have much cause for gratitude amidst the worries and vexations which I am afraid annoy me more than they ought. But it is my earnest desire and prayer that all my ways may be guided aright, and that I may have a 'right judgment in all things'—the need of which I deeply feel—and may have grace and strength faithfully to discharge all the duties which devolve on me.

Sir George Grey was willing that his ser-

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vices should be forgotten ; but there were many who wished to leave a memorial of their strong feeling of the debt which the country owed to his wisdom. A large number of both parties in the House of Commons asked him to sit for his portrait, which they proposed to present to Lady Grey. The committee comprised representative men of all kinds, such as the Earls of Harrowby and Effingham, Lord Robert Grosvenor, Sir William Heathcote, Sir Harry Verney, Mr. Carr-Glyn, Mr. W. Hall, Mr. J. Wilson-Patten, and Mr. Sotheran. The portrait was presented to Lady Grey in May, 1850, with a wish that it might be 'the means of preserving to his family, to his friends, and to his country, the recollections of his eminent services, as well as of that high moral character and kindly demeanour which have justly endeared him to so large a circle of parliamentary contemporaries of various political opinions. The portrait in full length, which was painted by Mr. (afterwards Sir Francis) Grant, represents Sir George Grey in a standing position, and happily expresses the characteristic

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animation of his handsome and dignified appearance.

During the remainder of the Session other measures were required for the maintenance of public order. Sir George Grey conducted through the House an Alien Act, which gave the Executive authority to remove any foreigners who might be dangerous to the peace of the country. It is noticeable that this Act was not on any occasion put in force. In July the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in Ireland; and Mr. Smith O'Brien's ill-judged attempt at an insurrection ended in ignominious failure. When the Session came to an end, Englishmen could, with pardonable pride, echo the sentiments of the Queen's Speech, which, after speaking of the disturbances on the Continent, went on to say:

> Amid these convulsions I have had the satisfaction of being able to preserve peace for my own dominions, and to maintain our domestic tranquillity. The strength of our institutions has been tried, and has not been found wanting. I have studied to preserve the people committed to my charge in the enjoyment of that temperate freedom which they so

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justly value. My people, on their side, feel too sensibly the advantages of order and security to allow the promoters of pillage and confusion any chance of success in their wicked designs.

In the next Session Ireland was still the chief subject of the Home Secretary's care. In February Sir George Grey had to move the continuance for six months of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, for the purpose of suppressing the secret disaffection which still lurked in some parts. He was, as usual, studiously moderate in his statements, and the Bill was speedily passed. He was further occupied with a measure for the amendment of poor relief in Ireland, and another for the better organisation of the Metropolitan Police. These complicated measures of administrative reform he carried through the House.

A trivial matter, which occurred in February, 1850, is extremely characteristic of Sir George Grey's political attitude. The Bill concerning the Ecclesiastical Commission was the object of much controversy. In the course of debate Lord John Russell accepted some amendments,

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which were handed in by Sir George Grey to the Speaker, were read and were accepted by the House. Mr. Horsman, in a letter to his constituents at Cockermouth, which appeared in the newspapers, declared that the amendments handed in by Sir George Grey were different from those which Lord John Russell had accepted, and were smuggled through the House at the end of a debate. In a subsequent speech upon the Bill, Sir George Grey referred to this accusation and said, 'If I abstain from replying to the charge, it is because I do not feel myself justified in entering into charges published only in the pages of a newspaper.' His decided opinion always was, that the business of Parliament ought to be conducted within the walls of the House. He objected to extra-parliamentary utterances, and neither indulged in them nor noticed them. He considered them as unfair, and as a fertile cause of embarrassment and dispute. He desired a full expression of opinion face to face, and was content to say all he had to say in his place in Parliament. He thought that every man

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should bear the full responsibility for his opinions, and should state them with the moderation, which is produced by the knowledge that an answer will be immediately made to exaggerated expressions. He considered the object of Parliament to be a practical object—the transaction of the business of the country with all possible despatch. He was most jealous of the dignity of Parliament, and careful of its efficiency. He set himself by precept and example, to maintain a high standard of diligence and good feeling in parliamentary procedure. He regretted, in his later years, the increasing frequency of extra-parliamentary utterances, of pamphlets and magazine articles by responsible statesmen. He thought that the proceedings of Parliament were sufficient, both for the transaction of public business and for the political education of the people. He did not think that either process was rendered easier by being carried on independently of the other. The statesmen of the present day have agreed to decide otherwise. But we must estimate the statesmen of the last generation

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by reference to their own conception of their position and of their duty.

In March, 1850, Mr. H. Berkeley, member for Bristol, introduced a motion in favour of the ballot. In doing so he said 'he found he had fresh opponents in the field. He found that he had to contend with the Home Secretary, who was formerly a supporter of the measure. The brilliant eloquence, the acute logical powers of the right honourable Baronet, his character, and the important position which he held in Her Majesty's councils, made his example most dangerous.' The expressions are worth quoting, as showing the impression which Sir George Grey produced upon the House. His answer was characteristic of his sincerity and of his conception of the duties of a representative towards his constituents. He said that he had never regarded the ballot as a matter of primary importance. As member for Devonport, he found that his constituents desired it, and he accordingly acceded to their wishes and voted for it. Subsequent reflection had changed his opinion of its probable usefulness. At present

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there was no demand for it, and he followed his own belief that the protection of the few against intimidation, would be more than counterbalanced by the general loss of the feeling of responsibility which attached to the public performance of a public duty.

The other administrative measures which Sir George Grey carried through Parliament were a Factories Act and an Interments Act. In 1851 he supported Lord John Russell in his attempt to stop papal aggression by the Ecclesiastical Titles Act. This measure was not a fortunate one, and weakened the Government; while a condition of agricultural depression created much discontent. In March Lord John Russell resigned; but, as Lord Stanley was unable to form a Ministry, he resumed office. In December occurred the *coup d'état* in Paris, and Lord Palmerston, as Foreign Secretary, used language in recognition of the Government of Napoleon III. which had not received the assent of his colleagues. Lord John Russell required his resignation. In February, 1852, the Government was defeated

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by Lord Palmerston's help on a Local Militia Bill, and Lord John Russell resigned.

A dissolution took place in July, and in the general election which followed Sir George Grey lost his seat for North Northumberland. The contest was severe, but was conducted with excellent feeling. Sir George Grey bore his defeat with unfailing good humour, and took a friendly farewell of his former constituents. The general opinion on the contest was expressed in the *Times* newspaper:

> Sir George Grey, after having been defeated by a combination of territorial influence which it appeared from the first next to impossible to counteract, takes leave of his friends and enemies, supporters and opponents, with dignity, urbanity, and good temper. So little does he appear cast down by his defeat, that he is hardly conscious it is a defeat at all, and, while dwelling on the kind and warm-hearted support of the minority, forgets the existence of a majority. He is the very Harold Skimpole of electioneering. His mind is fixed on all that is bright, lively, and agreeable, and the more repulsive features of the contest are either quite forgotten or sedulously concealed. So well does defeat become him that one is almost consoled for his not obtaining the victory.

This equanimity under defeat was quite

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natural to Sir George Grey. It was not in his nature to feel any personal bitterness, or to lose his self-restraint in the excitement of a political contest. The contest in itself awakened the most lively interest, not only amongst the constituency, but amongst the masses of the working men in Northumberland. Sir George Grey was unsuccessful in his election; but during his canvass he had aroused the enthusiasm and won the regard of a great body of non-electors, who grieved over his failure. They desired to record their sense of his services, and a spontaneous movement was made amongst the working men to present Sir George Grey with a memorial of their esteem. A subscription was set on foot, and £400 was rapidly contributed, mostly in pence, by more than thirteen thousand working men. The testimonial took the shape of a silver salver and candelabrum. The candelabrum was made in a form which commemorated the origin of the gift. The stem of the tree which held the lights was supported by figures representing the industries of Northumberland—a husbandman, an

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ironworker, and a miner. It bore the inscription:

To the Right Honourable Sir George Grey, Bart., M.P., K.C.B.; from more than thirteen thousand of the working men of Northumberland, in testimony of their gratitude for his support of the just, wise, and beneficial measure of Free Trade, their respect for his private worth, and for the eminent integrity and ability which have distinguished his public career.

The presentation was made at Alnwick before an immense concourse, on March 28, 1853. In making the presentation, Mr. Young, a working man, said:

The working classes, Sir George, can appreciate worth. Consistency of character, singleness of purpose, and distinguished abilities will always command their homage and respect. The working classes of Northumberland have confidence in you that all measures calculated to promote their happiness and welfare will receive your best consideration, your impartial verdict. Your past career is your pledge and guarantee to them for this. If any difference of opinion has existed, be assured of this, that the working classes of Northumberland are fully convinced that your votes on all occasions have been given honestly and conscientiously.

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Any man might well feel proud of such testimony of the esteem of the working classes.

It was natural that a statesman of Sir George Grey's eminence should not long remain without a seat in Parliament. Durham and Peterborough both invited him to become a candidate for vacant seats; but Sir George declined the requisitions. He was not sorry to have a little rest from parliamentary labours, and he did not wish to sever his political connection with Northumberland, where he had been warmly received.

Sir George Grey consequently was outside Parliament during the debates on Mr. D'Israeli's financial resolutions, which ended in the overthrow of Lord Derby's Ministry in December, 1852. In the negotiations which led to the formation of the Coalition Ministry, under Lord Aberdeen, Sir George Grey was consulted, but declined to take office. In January, 1853, a vacancy occurred in the representation of Morpeth, and Sir George Grey was unanimously chosen to fill it. He held his seat at

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Morpeth uncontested to the end of his parliamentary career.

In the Session of 1853 Sir George Grey did not come prominently forward, but he did much to facilitate the business of the House, of which he had great experience. In June, 1854, there were changes in the Ministry, and Sir George Grey, at the earnest request of Lord John Russell, consented to take office, and became Colonial Secretary. Nothing except a sense of duty led him to accept office. He felt that the times were critical, and that no man ought to refuse to render to the Government such services as he could. War had been declared against Russia, and the Ministry was by no means as firmly united as a Government ought to be which has to face a severe emergency. Sir George Grey's presence in the Cabinet supplied an adviser of strong practical sense and moderating temper.

In the heated debates on the conduct of the war in the Crimea, Sir George Grey took no part. But he warmly opposed Mr. Roebuck's motion for a Committee of Inquiry into the

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condition of the army. He regarded it as being without precedent, and as tending to weaken the hands of the Executive at a time when energy was most requisite. The motion was, however, carried by a large majority, and Lord Aberdeen resigned in January, 1855. Lord Derby in vain tried to form a Ministry, and Lord John Russell met with no better success. Lord Palmerston accepted the office of Premier, and in his Cabinet most of the old Ministers were included. Sir George Grey resumed office as Home Secretary. In a speech in the House of Commons, on February 23, he frankly stated his own view of the political situation:

In tendering my resignation I had not the remotest idea that it was not final and conclusive. I should most gladly have declined to form part of the new Ministry, not from any want of confidence in Lord Palmerston, or from any difference of policy, but because under the circumstances of the case I thought it was deeply to be regretted that a totally new Government was not formed. But the times were critical. It was not a moment when the country could be left without any Government I

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had no right to withhold my assistance, though I might think that undue importance was attached to it.

Sir George Grey had a personal reason for following, with the deepest interest, the course of the Crimean war, and longing for its end. His only son, while still a boy, had declared his liking for a soldier's life. Sir George Grey did his utmost to dissuade him from this career; and the boy, though not convinced by his arguments, yielded to his father's wishes and prepared for a University life. But when it seemed that England needed soldiers, Sir George Grey felt that he could not conscientiously keep back from the service of his country, one who wished to devote himself to it. Finding his son's inclination still unchanged, he withdrew his opposition, and with a heavy heart saw his only child embark for the Crimea with the Rifle Brigade, in January 1855. During the war the despatches were read with the tremulous interest of a father before they were weighed with the care of a statesman. Few men in England were more sincerely

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thankful for the peace; few men had a greater horror of war in itself than Sir George Grey.

At the Home Office Sir George Grey had considerable trouble in July, 1855, in consequence of riots in Hyde Park, which arose about Lord Richard Grosvenor's Sunday Trading Bill. The Bill was withdrawn, but not until the pressure from outside had been felt in the House of Commons, and the Home Secretary had much trouble in keeping the peace. Next year the work of police organisation was carried further by a Counties and Borough Police Bill. Sir George Grey also spoke strongly in favour of the Divorce Bill, which he assisted in carrying through the protracted debates in Committee. In 1857 he introduced a Bill dealing with secondary punishments and modifying the ticket-of-leave system. Again, the Government, of which he formed a part, had a serious responsibility laid on its shoulders by the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny. Again he saw his son depart to dangerous service in the field.

The beginning of 1858 saw Lord Palmer-

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ston's Government defeated on the Conspiracy Bill. Sir George Grey was a warm advocate of this measure, and twice spoke strongly in its favour. But the popular temper was against it, and Lord Palmerston was driven from office. Under Lord Derby's Ministry Sir George Grey enjoyed a brief respite from responsibility. In May his mother died at the advanced age of eighty-seven, and he keenly felt her loss. She had always been to him a friend and counsellor; her character had been marked by a simple and fervent piety to which he owed much, and which had found a ready echo in his own breast. She was to him a source of strength and comfort to the last. In the end of the year he welcomed back from India his son, who was soon afterwards made Equerry to the Prince of Wales and accompanied him next year in his travels.

In Parliament Sir George Grey did not take any very prominent part. On one occasion a speech of Mr. D'Israeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, addressed to his constituents at Slough, was brought before the House on

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account of the bitterness of its attack on the late Government. Some words of Sir George Grey's deserve quotation, as illustrating his strong feeling of the responsibility attaching to a statesman, and of the need of caution and reserve. He said of Mr. D'Israeli:

> He has been so long in Opposition that he has acquired the habit of spreading broadcast charges in high-sounding language, which he either shirks from proving or is unable to sustain. But I trust that what has occurred will give him a lesson, and teach him to act with more dignity and more caution than he has yet displayed in the high office which he holds. I trust that he will learn to think not so much of catching the transient popularity of the hour or of hurling a sarcasm at a political opponent, but that he will think, act, and speak as a statesman.

Mr. D'Israeli did not at that time have much longer training in the responsibilities of office. Lord Derby's Government was defeated on the Reform Bill in April, 1859, and, after appealing to the country, resigned in May. Lord Palmerston again became Prime Minister, and Sir George Grey resumed office as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He was free

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from the duties of an onerous office for a while. But in 1862 a vacancy occurred at the War Office, and that post was pressed upon Sir George Grey. On his refusal Sir George Lewis went to the War Office, and Sir George Grey succeeded him as Home Secretary—the post most congenial to him.

At the Home Office Sir George Grey quietly pursued his administrative career. Measures that issue from the Home Office are important at the time, but are quickly superseded. They generally consist in amendments of the law in points of detail, and in the remedy of grievances which, when redressed, are speedily forgotten. A Highways Bill and a Corrupt Practices Bill were introduced by Sir George Grey in 1862; and in 1863 the Prison Ministers Bill allowed prisoners to be attended by ministers of their own religious persuasion. Some very exceptional cases of murder occurred which created great popular excitement, and the duty of the Home Secretary in advising the Queen in the exercise of her prerogative of mercy was beset with

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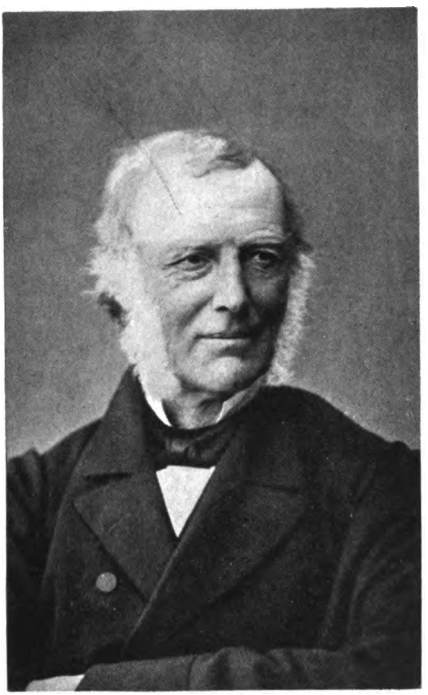

SIR GEORGE GREY

From a photograph by W. & D. Downey taken about 1870.

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difficulty. It was impossible for Sir George Grey to escape criticism, however he acted; but his legal training stood him in good stead. He neglected no pains to make up his mind, and he arrived at his conclusion under a deep sense of responsibility. But when he had done his best he adhered resolutely to his opinion, while those who dissented from him had no ground to complain of want of attention to their opinions.

The year 1865 brought a heavy responsibility on the Home Secretary, in consequence of the outbreak of the cattle plague. In 1866 Sir George Grey brought forward the Cattle Plague Bill, which was found to be effective in stamping out the disease. Moreover, Ireland was again disturbed, and the Fenian conspiracy required measures of repression. Sir George Grey had again to discharge the ungrateful task of moving the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, which he did with his customary moderation. Again, he carefully marshalled his facts and showed the necessity of the measure, which was quickly

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passed. In the same Session Sir George Grey carried through the House a Parliamentary Oaths Bill, which reduced to one simple form, declaring true allegiance to the Queen, the oaths required from members of Parliament.

This was Sir George Grey's last legislative achievement. In June the Government was defeated on the Reform Bill, and resigned. When the Liberal party returned to power under Mr. Gladstone, in 1868, Sir George Grey did not take office; nor did he take a prominent part in the affairs of that Parliament. He contented himself with helping the business of the House, a task for which his large experience of Parliament rendered him peculiarly fitted. He spoke chiefly on questions of order and points concerning the procedure of the House. In other matters he made way for younger men.

With the dissolution of 1874 Sir George Grey's parliamentary career came to an end. The Reform Bill of 1868 had modified the constituency of the borough of Morpeth by

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throwing into it a considerable district which was chiefly inhabited by miners. The miners of Northumberland were amongst the foremost in forming a powerful organisation, and in pressing for legislative measures on the questions which deeply interested the working classes. In this they had Sir George Grey's full sympathy and support, which they gratefully recognised. In a letter dated April 24, 1871, the Secretary of the Northumberland Miners' Mutual Confidence Association wrote:

> We held a committee meeting on Saturday, and a resolution was unanimously agreed to, thanking you for your many acts of kindness to the miners. I have very great pleasure in thus being the medium of conveying to you the hearty gratitude of the hard-working miners of this part of the country. In doing so, allow me to express the hope—shared in, I am sure, by thousands of hard toilers—that your life and health may long be spared to serve your country in the high and honourable position which you so worthily occupy.

But though the miners of the Morpeth district had full confidence in Sir George Grey, the position of the borough was somewhat

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exceptional. After some struggles on technical points, the miners in a body succeeded in placing their names on the register of voters. The result was that the constituency was increased from 2,000 to 5,000 voters, the addition being purely from the miners. It was but natural that, in one of the very few constituencies in England in which the miners were in a majority, they should wish to use the opportunity of having a representative of their own class. In Mr. Burt they could boast one of the ablest and most prominent advocates of their cause. Though the miners of the Morpeth district regarded Sir George Grey with sincere respect, they felt that it was a duty which they owed to their own class throughout the country, to use the exceptional opportunity which they possessed of returning a miners' representative to Parliament.

Sir George Grey had already proposed retiring from parliamentary life. Increasing years brought infirmities, and he was no longer able to attend the House of Commons with the regularity which he could have wished. When

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he heard that a requisition was being signed to Mr. Burt, and that a public meeting was to be held in his favour, he at once determined to withdraw. In October, 1873, he announced to the electors of Morpeth that he did not intend again to offer himself as a candidate. Great regret was felt by many of his friends at this determination, and there was a desire, which was echoed far beyond the limits of the borough of Morpeth, to present him with a testimonial on his retirement. The movement had taken shape before Sir George Grey heard of it. As soon as it came to his ears he resolutely set his face against it, and it was dropped at his express request. He was most solicitous that nothing should be said or done which could in the least degree seem to challenge the action of the miners. His retirement was without any bitterness on his part. He fully appreciated the motives of those who brought forward another candidate, and he would not be a party to any expression of adverse opinion. He severed his connection with the borough of Morpeth amid the respect and good will of all

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classes. The last act of his public life was to refuse a recognition of his public services that it might not be the means of calling forth any unguarded expressions which might, ever so little, tend to create hostility between classes.

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CHAPTER III

LATER DAYS, 1874–1882

THE records of a political life are not in themselves more interesting than those of any other career. As events pass on before the eyes of contemporaries, they seem to be of urgent importance; but when the crisis is past, the qualities which were needed to deal with it successfully receive scanty recognition from posterity. As we turn over the pages of 'Hansard,' and follow the debates of Parliament from day to day, we see how periods, which we look back upon as times of unbroken tranquillity, presented momentous issues to those who lived through them. There were angry recriminations; there were prophecies of coming disaster; there were threatening move-

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ments; there were endless possibilities of political blunders. The business of the country, we feel, has to be conducted like the business of a great trading firm. Each day brings its problems to be solved; each day requires a clear head and a directing hand. If the business goes on smoothly, it is because the clear head and the directing hand are always ready. The firm steadily prospers, till men think it is almost a law of nature that it should continue to do so.

In some such manner Sir George Grey regarded the office of a statesman. He did not deny the necessity of the political education of the people by means of popular movements. He did not disregard the need of boldly advancing to face new problems, of discovering new principles which should be fruitful in the future. But at an early period of his parliamentary career he was called to take office, and he made up his mind to discharge the duties of an official. He viewed this responsibility seriously, and undertook it thoroughly. It may be said that he devoted himself to the

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duty of being a capable official, to the exclusion of all other considerations. He left to others the political education of the people, because he thought that utterances outside Parliament weakened the position of a Minister in the House of Commons. He did not seek for new principles in politics, because he thought that the duty of a Minister was to apply to the best of his ability those principles on which the majority of the House of Commons was agreed, and to apply them in a manner which should be as little offensive as possible to the minority. When he entered Parliament in 1833, he found that the Reform Bill had practically enunciated principles, which required the reconstruction of much of the political fabric. He made it the business of his life to carry out these principles in their details.

We have now passed beyond the ideas of 1832 into a new region of political activity, the guiding principles of which have not yet been exactly determined. Towards the formation of these new principles Sir George Grey made no direct contribution. His name nowadays

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is connected with no political cry, and awakens no enthusiasm among those whose eyes are directed to the future. His career, his course of action, the spirit which guided him, belong to the history of the past. He may be considered without embarking in controversy, and his name rouses no angry feeling in the heart of any man. He is to be appraised, not for the brilliancy of his public services, but for their intrinsic and sterling worth.

The tendency of modern political criticism is to characterise a statesman of Sir George Grey's type as cold in his expressions and narrow in his views. This is the judgment which the ardent aspirations of any age tend to mete out to those who wisely and cautiously directed the affairs of the age which went before. As applied to Sir George Grey, such a criticism is singularly untrue. Few men have ever possessed a warmer heart and wider sympathies. He was at home with all classes, and understood them all. From the dockyard labourers of Devonport and the miners and

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farmers of Northumberland to the highest circles in the land, Sir George Grey won ready respect and affection. He might have been, if he had chosen, a great popular orator. Nature had endowed him with a commanding presence and a melodious voice. He possessed great fluency and readiness of speech. He had the instincts of an orator; he had deep feelings, and could gather and express in a moment the sentiments of his audience. He did not, however, choose to make himself a popular speaker. He had undertaken the task of administration, and he reserved himself entirely for that. He did not trust the feelings of the moment, but sought counsel by reflection. He would not commit himself to principles till he had discovered how they were applicable in points of detail. He would not win an oratorical triumph at the cost of future embarrassment. He would not say anything which might be capable of dubious interpretation, or which might call for further explanation. He regarded it to be his prime duty that he should say and do nothing which might enable opponents in the House of Commons to

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call in question his wisdom, his sincerity, or his moderation.

It is no exaggeration to say that Sir George Grey was entirely devoid of personal ambition. He was ambitious only to do his duty to the best of his power. As Home Secretary he thought that he was most efficient when he was least prominent. He copied into his common-place book the following remarks of Lord Melbourne on the duties of a Home Secretary, and they may be taken as expressing his own conceptions :

> The situation is one of great importance to the Government, and in which more is to be done by personal influence and being on good terms with the members of the House, than by ability and eloquence. It requires prudence, discretion, freedom from all wild notions, conciliation, and, above all, a disregard of popularity. Many disagreeable questions are kept quiet by the fact of the member in whose department they are being silent and popular, and many would be raised and brought forward by the contrary feeling.

Beneath this quotation is written the remark of his own, ' This character was strikingly possessed by Sir G. C. Lewis.' The remark

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is singularly characteristic of Sir George Grey's genuine modesty and humility. During the two years from 1859 to 1861, when Sir George Lewis was Home Secretary and Sir George Grey was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, he heartily admired the way in which the duties of his favourite office were discharged by his friend.

There is something of the old Roman type in the way in which Sir George Grey merged his own personality in the discharge of his public duties. He had no thought of self, no personal vanity, but only strove to serve his country to the best of his power. His colleagues in the Cabinet recognised the fact and respected him accordingly. His moderating power was great in composing conflicting opinions. His strong practical sense, his knowledge of the House of Commons, and of the temper of the country, made his advice on all matters singularly weighty. The influence which he exercised on the conduct of affairs during a quarter of a century was known to few outside the Cabinet. He was content to be

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useful, and needed no public recognition of his services. The majority of his colleagues during his long official life have passed away. The testimony of a few who survive may be briefly given:

No colleague ever created in me deeper feelings of attachment and of admiration than Sir George Grey.

From the time when first I knew him, I have regarded his public and private character with respect and admiration, mixed with personal affection, such as I have felt for few other men. So just, so wise, so free from all form of self-assertion, so steady and consistent in the performance of duty, so sound in judgment.

A man of nobler nature, a man more worthy at once of love and respect I have never known. I consider it one of the many undeserved good fortunes of my life that I commenced my official career under him. I then learned to appreciate the purity, generosity, and elevation of his character, his devotion to his duty and the public good, and his utter disregard of all selfish considerations.[1]

These are but samples of the concurrent testimony of all who were brought into close relations with him in his public life.

[1] In addition to the above, the testimony of Lord Granville, quoted by Lord Northbrook, may be added: 'During my whole experience of Cabinets, Sir George was the colleague who exercised most influence upon home affairs.'—L. C.

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Sir George Grey devoted himself to a quiet and unassuming career of public usefulness. He aimed at wise and careful administration. He was content that the affairs of his department should move on smoothly and create little attention. He strove to heal breaches and to patch up rents. He was guarded in his utterances; he was always discreet and moderate. He cultivated official reserve from a sense of duty, till it became habitual to him. In his later life he talked freely and frankly about politics; but no one, save his old political friends, ever heard him say a word about his own doings in the past. He did not think it right that politics should be degraded into personal gossip. Gossip of every kind was hateful to him, and he deplored the indiscretions of modern biographers. For my own part, I can say that during a long and intimate intercourse with Sir George Grey, I learnt from him no facts about the politics of the past which were not already public. He never spoke about his former colleagues or his own part in affairs. He never quoted any words of others; he

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never attributed an evil motive to any one. Sometimes, when speaking about present politics, he would rapidly sketch his views of the probabilities of the fate of a measure before Parliament, and his opinion was almost always borne out by events. He knew by long experience the formation of parliamentary combinations and the nature of the opposition which a measure would create. He had acquired an almost instinctive knowledge of the working of the parliamentary machine.

Sir George Grey had, in his day, a unique knowledge of the House of Commons, and a unique influence over it. His influence was founded on the universal respect which his high character inspired and the affection which his genuine kindliness created on all sides. He robbed party politics of their bitterness. No one who heard him speak suspected that he had any personal end to serve, or that he was otherwise than entirely frank in his statements. He provoked no one to attack him, and none dissented from him without an apology. When the business of the House was embarrassed,

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when there was a difficulty about some point of procedure, the conspicuous fairness and good temper of Sir George Grey supplied an unfailing resource. When formal motions of some delicacy were to be moved—as, for instance, the address on the assassination of President Lincoln, or the election of a Speaker, —Sir George Grey knew how to do it with admirable tact and dignity. He knew how to say the most that could be said without entering into anything that could call forth dissent or give rise to controversy.

This knowledge of the House of Commons was not acquired with difficulty, nor was it the result of any special endeavour. It was the natural consequence of Sir George Grey's kindliness and sociability. He knew the members individually, and was always ready to hear what any one had to say. His own mind was always open, and that fact created a corresponding openness in others. He was never so immersed in business that he lost his interest in those around him. He never supposed that the care of weighty matters absolved

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a statesman from the ordinary duties of courtesy and consideration for others. He was ready to befriend new members, to explain the procedure of the House, and to advise them about their own business. From their experience of him in little things, members learned to trust him in great things. Nor was this feeling confined to his own side of the House of Commons. Since I became a neighbour of Sir George Grey, I have never met any one connected with political life who did not hasten to talk to me about him. Men of very different ages and of very different political opinions showed the warmest admiration for him. Every one had some reminiscence of Sir George Grey's past kindness, of some little service rendered, of some help or counsel. No man has ever been more universally respected by those who knew him.

It was but natural that Sir George Grey's influence should be greatly exercised upon the officials of his department. He left behind him a high standard of political integrity and capacity. He did much to elevate the tone of

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parliamentary life, and to train others who should follow in his steps. Amongst his private secretaries at different times were Sir Henry Brand, the Earl of Northbrook, Lord Hobart, and Sir Henry G. Loch.

When Sir George Grey left the House of Commons in 1874, amidst the many changes which the new election brought, his loss was felt to be one of the greatest. In seconding the election of the Speaker, Lord George Cavendish said :

> On no former occasion have we lost so many of those members who took part in discussions regarding the rules of the House, and who were so conversant with its proceedings. First I may refer to the gracious presence we have lost in the person of Sir George Grey, whom we shall long miss in this House, and who was always regarded as one of its greatest authorities.

The phrase 'gracious presence' was admirably chosen to express Sir George Grey's appearance in the House of Commons, and the cheer which it called forth showed that it awakened the memory of many acts of graceful courtesy and of many kindly words.

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In retiring from parliamentary life, Sir George Grey took with him no bitter recollections, no feelings of disappointment or of regret. Retirement from the stage of active political life is a trial to most men, and is one which few men can pass through with satisfaction. There are few retired statesmen who do not cast lingering looks behind, and many fall before the natural temptation of thinking that affairs are worse conducted when they have ceased to have a hand in their management. Even if they escape this natural tendency, they adopt a purely critical attitude, and use their experience to point out faults of detail in the conduct of their successors—an easy matter when they are freed from the consideration of practical difficulties. None of these temptations overcame Sir George Grey. His retirement from political life was absolute and complete. He neither wrote nor spoke in criticism of his successors. Once only did he write a letter to the *Times* to correct some misstatements on matters of fact, about the relations between Lord Clarendon and his colleagues, touching

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Irish affairs in 1847. Then he apologised for doing so, on the ground that he was the sole surviving member of Lord John Russell's Cabinet who knew the actual facts. In private life he talked on political questions as an ordinary well-informed man. He listened patiently to the opinions of others, however young or inexperienced they might be. He gave his own views simply for what they were worth. No one listening to him would have guessed that he was a veteran statesman who had been familiar all his life with the questions under discussion.

On retiring from Parliament, Sir George Grey settled down to live in his country house at Fallodon. There he rejoiced in the company of his wife, his son, and his son's wife and children. Though now in his seventy-fifth year he was still vigorous enough to enjoy the simple pleasures of an active life in the country. Moreover he was still full of interests and could enjoy foreign travel. In May, 1874, he visited Holland and the Engadine, which he much enjoyed. But in October he was laid up by a

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severe attack of gout, from which he had scarcely recovered when he was prostrated by typhoid fever. He was so ill that his life was despaired of: nor was he the only sufferer. His son left Fallodon in the end of November —before Sir George Grey's illness had declared itself—to fulfil his duties as equerry to the Prince of Wales. Scarcely had he arrived at Sandringham before he was attacked by congestion of the lungs. His illness was rapid, and on December 11 he died. Sir George meanwhile was too seriously ill to be informed of this terrible misfortune.[1] When he gradually recovered, it was only to realise the heavy blow which had fallen upon him. Though crushed and overwhelmed for a time, he bowed his head with Christian submission and fortitude. He notes briefly in his journal: 'A dreadful blank when I began to get about again. "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, for it was Thy doing."'

[1] The heroism shown by Lady Grey at this time is worthy of record. Though herself crushed with sorrow, she read aloud to Sir George during his illness letters received from her son before his death, without betraying by her words or manner what had happened.—L. C.

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In many things does the life of Sir George Grey afford a bright example; but in nothing was the solid strength of his character more conspicuously displayed than in the resoluteness with which he faced this sudden and unexpected misfortune. His nature was far from being stoical. He was a man of the warmest affections and of the keenest sensibility. He shrank from suffering, as he did from inflicting, pain. He was deeply attached to his son, and had followed his career with profound interest and sympathy. He had pictured to himself an old age cheered by his son's companionship. His son's loss was to him a terrible blow, and left him with an inevitable sense of overpowering desolation. At his advanced age it was a grievous task to remake his life and adjust himself to a future so sadly different from that of which he had dreamed.

Sir George Grey communed with God in his own heart, and was still. He was strengthened to resist the selfish luxury of woe. He was led to see that his duty was to conquer his own sorrow, to live for others, and to devote the remainder of his life still more steadfastly to the

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service of those who remained. None who witnessed even the distant signs of his struggle against his own grief can ever forget its splendid pathos. His extremely nervous and sensitive nature was very susceptible to depression, which nothing but his will, guided by God's good Spirit, enabled him to overcome. He strove against his natural self and triumphed; but the struggle was hard. He did not ask for sympathy; but he strove to give it. He did not seek consolation from man; but he sought it from God. He did not desire solitude that he might brood over his loss. He did not keep others away from him; but he welcomed their presence. Nor did he struggle alone in proud self-reliance, and hide his struggles from the eyes of others. He might be found seated mournfully alone in his room, and would rise with a look of agony upon his face. He would raise himself by a mighty effort of self-mastery, and gently begin to talk on what would interest his visitor. In a few moments his listlessness was gone, and he grew animated and cheerful. The sound of a

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child's voice in the distance strengthened and refreshed him. He lost himself and his own sorrow in his genuine interest for others. He lost himself that he might find a higher self; and those who saw him bowed their heads in reverence before the presence of a power that was not of this world.

The results of the steadfast piety of a life-time were seen in this final victory over self. During the busiest years of his life Sir George Grey always set apart a time for devotion, reading the Scriptures, and quiet meditation. He now arose from his affliction chastened, sanctified, and purified. No one saw him in his later years without wishing that he might so live as to deserve such an old age. He was in all points a model of

> The last of life for which the first was made.

The cultivation, the experience, the piety, the kindliness, the sympathy of a long life were summed up and mellowed in his character, and were expressed in his most trivial words and deeds. Nothing was too simple for him,

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nothing was too obscure. His large heart was ready for all calls upon it. His sympathies were so wide that the needs and sorrows of others became matters of real concern to himself, and often caused him absolute pain.

First and foremost he devoted himself to the care of his seven grandchildren, to whom he was a constant companion and friend. He had no difficulty in establishing with them entirely free and open intercourse. The old man of eighty might be seen leading his granddaughters in a gallop over the greensward, his laugh mingling joyously with theirs. He delighted to watch them in their games, to plan picnics and expeditions for them, and laughed with good-humoured resentment at their endeavours to take care of him, and guard him against possible colds or rheumatism. He read classics with his grandsons in their holidays, and keenly watched their progress in learning. Every morning he would gather his granddaughters together, and read with them some English classic, a play of Shakespeare, or a novel or poem of Scott. He read with fire and spirit,

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which entranced his listeners and made them sigh when the hour was at an end. Their youthful sallies amused him; their interests were his. They claimed his advice and help in anything that was near their heart. He was never impatient of their presence, or irritated by their solicitude. In his last illness he was anxious that the children should not discontinue their sports, or be made to keep quiet on his account. As he lay in pain upon his bed, he was cheered by the sound of their voices as they played lawn tennis under his window, and, if he did not hear them, would ask that they should not cease their games through fear of disturbing him.

Nor was his geniality confined to his family circle. The visits of his friends and neighbours were always acceptable to him. The simple hospitality of Fallodon was always open to all comers, and there was no sense of constraint. Moreover, Sir George Grey did not only welcome old friends, or those whose acquaintance he had already made. He enjoyed meeting strangers and talking to them. In my own

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case, for instance, there was a sort of tacit understanding that any one who came to visit me was welcome to Fallodon at any time. From my own experience I can say that no stranger met Sir George Grey without keenly feeling the charm of his character. There were few who did not congratulate me on the privilege of enjoying constant intercourse with him.

Sir George Grey's conversation was singularly pleasant. He wished to hear others talk on their own subjects, and was anxious to learn about matters with which he was unfamiliar. I do not think that Sir George Grey knew what it was to feel bored. His interest was quickly aroused, and his mind worked rapidly and readily. He saw in a moment the points which were important to him. He quickly asked questions which gained for him the information which he wanted. He had unfailing tact in leading the conversation in the way which he wished, without seeming to do so. Every one felt his sincerity and became sincere in turn.

There was no need for reticence in talking

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to him; for no honest opinions offended him, however much he might differ from them. His manner immediately dispelled in others any thought of showing deference to his age and experience by concealing or toning down their own opinions. He was not annoyed by the unthinking enthusiasm of youth, or by the one-sided fanaticism of inexperience. He listened with an amused smile curling round his lips. Occasionally he would ask a Socratic question; if the speaker did not follow him, he would rapidly divert the conversation to something about which he was prepared to agree. He was prompt to see when enough had been said. He was skilful in turning a discussion into a new channel, while the talkers were entirely unconscious that it had been turned. It was impossible to feel dull in his society. A natural restlessness of disposition had been curbed into graceful vivacity. He was never at a loss. His mind was always at work, and whenever there was a pause, Sir George Grey was ready with a new suggestion.

No subject was too trivial for Sir George

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Grey's interest, provided it had a practical aim. He would give the fullest consideration to any suggestion of a possible plan of good in the smallest way to the most obscure person. He would discuss it and reflect upon it as thoroughly as though the most important issues were at stake. But, unless the conversation had a practical end, he preferred that it should deal with general principles. He wished that it should lead him either to do something, or to know something more definitely than he had known before. He did not choose political topics; he had no interest in the current mode of developing political opinions by prejudiced criticism founded on imperfect information. But he would discuss with ardour political problems as a whole, and sought with eagerness for any historical experience which might throw light upon them. Above all things Sir George Grey did not like to discuss the characters or motives of others. He always said what was to be said in the defence of any one who was impugned. When he had nothing to say, he would quietly withdraw from the conversation, would move away to another group,

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often to a group of children, or would dexterously change the topic.

Sir George Grey had never been so entirely immerged in politics as to forget other subjects. His reading was large and varied, and he had kept up all the studies of his youth. He was familiar with the chief English classics. He was fond of poetry, not so much for its form as for its contents. He loved the simpler forms that dealt with human life and character—such as are found in Crabbe, Burns, and Scott. He read and re-read his favourite books; but he was also eager to know all that was passing in the minds of others. He read all the best works of History, Biography, Travel, or Fiction, as they came out, and liked to discuss their contents. He was a rapid, but a singularly observant reader. He wished to get to the permanent value of a book, to find what was the writer's contribution to the truth. He preferred memoirs to novels, because he could learn more from his own analysis of a real character than from the novelist's combination of different traits. He

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liked to gather together such opinions as were useful to him. He kept a commonplace book in which he wrote down striking quotations. How observant he was in his miscellaneous reading may be shown by one small instance. I remember that he pointed out to me a coincidence of critical judgment in unexpected quarters. Prosper Mérimée wrote to Panizzi about Carlyle's 'French Revolution:'

> Je lis cette affreuse histoire de Carlyle et je suis tenté de jeter le livre par la fenêtre. Il y a pourtant des recherches et du travail, mais une prétention insupportable et une outrecuidance achevée.

Caroline Fox records in her 'Memoirs:'

> Walter Savage Landor said: 'Carlyle's "French Revolution" was a wicked book: he had worn out one volume in tossing it on the floor at startling passages.'

Sir George Grey's commonplace book shows his carefulness to garner all that was useful to him. The nature of the extracts which he made illustrates the tendency of his thoughts. In early years they consist chiefly of historical abstracts of a period or of a subject. Afterwards they deal with political principles or

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maxims for the conduct of affairs. Finally they are mainly occupied with moral reflections, and the last entries made are concerned with the lessons of old age, and the preparation of the soul for God's presence. In every case the quotations are short, pithy, and striking. They are not selected by one who is easily caught by a passing fancy, or is attracted by the graceful turn of a phrase. They are chosen because they pack into a short space some thought that is practically helpful. They are remarkable for strength and profundity of meaning rather than for elegance. They mark the character of a man whose great desire was for truth, who wished above all things to get to the root of the matter.

Chief amongst the subjects which occupied his mind was the study of theology. He read largely devotional books. He was very fond of hymns, especially those of Kirke-White, Cowper, and Bonar. His religious attitude was certainly remarkable. He had laid a firm grasp on the vital principles of the Christian faith, and held to them with unswerving tena-

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city. His religious belief was firmly incorporated into his inmost being, and formed part of himself. But he drew a clear distinction between what he felt to be essential and what a matter of opinion. The central point of his own religious feeling was the Atonement, which he did not undertake to explain, but which he felt to be absolutely necessary. The sense of sin was ever present with him, and he found in the Cross of Christ the sense of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. But on all other points concerning theology he was exceedingly tolerant of diversities of opinion. I quote the words of one who knew him longer than myself:

> He had worked his way out of the narrow groove of certain religious prejudices not without much struggle and self-sacrifice. But he never for one moment swerved from the most implicit faith in the great cardinal doctrines in which he had been brought up, and which were to the end his very life and sustenance. Constant reading of religious and theological works kept his mind alive to the stirring questions of his time. These helped him to solve some difficulties of his own, and to regard with greater consideration those of others who, perhaps, had not the same advantages as himself.

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Two entries in his commonplace book are eminently characteristic of the practical attitude of his religious life:

There are few things so helpful to our growth in grace as concerning ourselves actively for the souls of others.

A man is not tolerant till he is tolerant of the intolerance of others.

The simplicity and humility of Sir George Grey's faith may be seen by the following extract from a letter to an old friend, written in 1880:

One hymn I have learned as expressing what a retrospect of life makes one deeply feel:

'And, oh, how all I've been and done
Would drive me to despair,
If to the Cross I could not turn,
And find a Saviour there.'

Sir George Grey's life was not so busied with politics as to exclude philanthropic activity. He was in early life a member of the committee of the Church Missionary Society, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and of the London and Metropolitan District-Visiting Society. So long as he was able, he

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used to devote his Sunday afternoons, when he was in London, to visiting the poor in the district of St. Giles. When he was in the country, he made himself the personal friend of all those who dwelt in his neighbourhood. He would always stop and talk with them. He spoke to them as an equal and a friend. He won their confidence, and was their adviser in all their affairs, and their consoler in their troubles. He frequently visited the sick, and spoke words of Christian comfort. He was ever ready to assist those who were in need, but he did so wisely and thoroughly. He did not give way to the luxury of indiscriminate almsgiving. He reflected upon the wisest course to adopt ; and, when he undertook a case, he undertook it thoroughly. He was greatly interested in education, and was the chief supporter and manager of an elementary school in his own neighbourhood, while he also cheerfully helped others. He visited his own school regularly and spoke words of encouragement to the children. To the end of his days he welcomed the school-children annually to

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his house, joined in their sports, and loaded them with presents. He was always ready to take trouble in doing thoughtful acts of kindness for the good of others. He had a lending library for the use of his neighbourhood. He kept the catalogue himself, and used to make up parcels of books and deliver them at different centres, where they might be most easily accessible to a scattered population. He carefully noticed what books were most popular, and tried to get others of a like kind. Similarly in the winter evenings, when it was too dark to go a second time to the church, which was two miles distant, he used to hold a service in his hall, which all were welcome to attend. He was an impressive reader, and his service was very popular. He read the Evening Prayer of the Church Service, and chose a sermon which was suitable to those who assembled round him.

Thus Sir George Grey's later years were full of manifold activity. He loved his home and its surroundings, and bound others to him in a remarkable way. He was genuinely attached to those around him and attached

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them to himself. He entered with a keen zest into all the pursuits of country life. He was fond of sport, especially of hunting in company with his son, and it had a most exhilarating effect upon him. His enjoyment of the beauties of nature was great, and he was very fond of topographical details. A fine sunset gave him exquisite delight, and he constantly quoted the lines:

> Those hues that mark the sun's decline,
> So grand, so gorgeous, Lord, are Thine.

He was an excellent man of business, careful and methodical, and took real pleasure in farming and in the management of his estate.

Few men have had a larger heart, and few have enjoyed a fuller life. 'In a far greater degree than most public men,' writes a veteran statesman, 'Sir George Grey had a beautifully developed private side to his character. He had a sweet, attractive grace, which is given to few, whereby his excellent qualities were rendered popular and influential.'

Sir George Grey lived for his last years at

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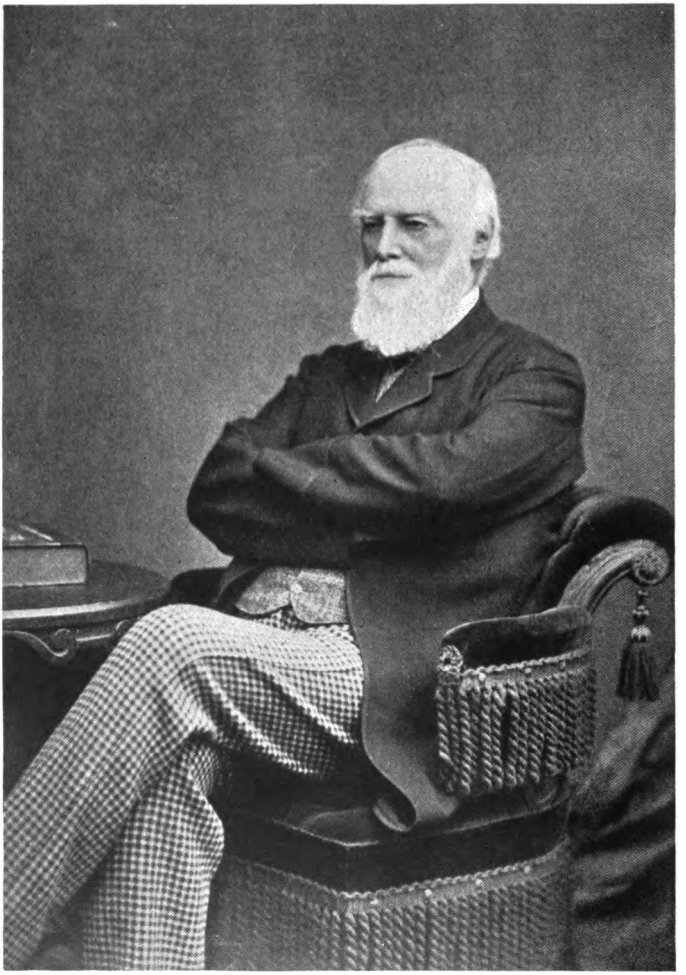

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Fallodon, always busy and always cheerful in the presence of others. He lived simply, and never spent money on mere luxuries or on personal expenses; but he was liberal for all public objects and for all good works. In the spring he used to seek shelter from the east winds in the South of England, latterly for the most part at Bournemouth. In his journey he would visit old friends and make new ones, and he always returned to Fallodon full of new interests and engaged in investigating new problems. The quickness and keenness of his intellect never failed till the end. His mind was always young.

As years passed on, Sir George Grey suffered, with growing frequency, from attacks of gout. He was extremely sensitive to pain, and shrank from the anticipation of these attacks. But he strove against this feeling as unworthy, and quickly shook it off. He suffered also keenly from another of the inevitable sorrows of old age—the loss of friends. The news of death drove him to a retrospect, which opened up old sores in a

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very sensitive heart. His brief diary, which he regularly kept, became more and more a chronicle of the loss of dear relatives and friends.

On his return to Fallodon from the South in June, 1882, it was evident that Sir George Grey was suffering much pain. He had over-exerted himself in paying a visit to Tenby, and had been seized by rheumatic gout. The days passed on and he showed no signs of improvement. It was clear to those who saw him that he believed his end to be approaching. He used his failing strength to put his papers in order and arrange all his affairs. It was painful and depressing work, but he did it from a sense of duty. He made a diligent review of his past life. All letters which contained anything that his correspondents might not wish to see the light were carefully destroyed. All that he thought might be of service to others, were arranged in order and committed to the charge of his nephew, the Earl of Northbrook. His papers concerning his own private affairs were so arranged that

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everything might be clear and intelligible when he was gone. He prepared for everything, even for the simple inscription which was to commemorate him after his departure.

His malady increased and complications set in. At the end of July he was confined to his bed, and the remainder of his days were spent in discomfort and suffering. Even then his thoughts were more about others than about himself. He was keenly sensible of his own helplessness, and was distressed at the thought that he absorbed so much of the time and attention of those around him. 'Everything is done for me,' he said more than once to me, 'that can be done. I think with shame of the many poor people who suffer more than I, and who have none to help them.' He was disturbed, because the constant pain prevented him from fixing his mind so entirely as he could wish on thoughts of God. 'I see now,' he said, 'how little can be done on a death bed. It would go hard with me if I had left the work of repentance till now. I only have strength to trust in God.' He beguiled

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his pains at night by repeating to his nurse his favourite hymns, of which he knew a great store by heart. He was always solaced and relieved by having texts of Scripture said to him. He welcomed prayer, and spoke of himself with profound and touching humility. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin' was the truth which he profoundly felt, and which always brought him comfort. He thought much and spoke often of his grandchildren, but refused to speculate on their future. 'They can do nothing,' he said, 'unless they seek the grace of God.' His old habits clung to him to the last. Every day he would dictate to one of his granddaughters a brief entry to be made in his journal. This he continued till the week before his death.

The days passed slowly in incessant pain. He longed for death, and was distressed that he was not more patient. 'Do you think it wrong,' he asked me, 'to pray for death?' If he seemed to rally a little, and those around him tried to kindle some hope in his breast, he

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shook his head sadly. 'I should only be laid on the sofa for a few weeks,' he said, 'and then it would all have to come over again.' His symptoms became more serious, and his strength failed. He was unable to speak, and could only press the hand of those who gathered at his bedside. But his ears were open to the voice of one who prayed, and the pressure of the hand was firmer when the words of God's comfort fell upon his heart. In the morning of September 9 he passed quietly away.

Though Sir George Grey died full of years, and had outlived well-nigh all his contemporaries, the news of his death brought a bitter sense of personal loss to many of every age and of every rank. He never made an enemy; all who saw him respected him, and all who knew him loved him. Those who were most dear to him felt that he had left behind the rich heritage of a bright example and a stainless name. If man's consolation could do anything to relieve the sense of bereavement, that consolation was abundantly given. From all

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sides came utterances wrung from the hearts of men accustomed to weigh their words.

On a grey day in September he was laid to his rest, by the side of his son, in Embleton churchyard. 'I never saw so many earnest faces wear such a serious look,' was the remark made to me afterwards by a simple but observant man.

Sir George Grey's reserve and humility are shown in the inscription which he chose to commemorate his resting place. Before his death he carefully revised it, and left nothing beyond the simple statement:

IN MEMORY OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR GEORGE GREY, BART.,
G.C.B.;

BORN MAY 11TH, 1799,

DIED SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1882.

'In Hope of Eternal Life.'

His many friends were desirous of placing

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some memorial to his name. The sum of £540 was rapidly subscribed. The design and execution of the memorial were the work of Mr. C. E. Kempe. The five windows of the chancel of Embleton Church were filled with painted glass so as to harmonise in effect and illustrate a truth at once appropriate to the position which they occupy in the church, and to the special purpose for which they were intended. They are designed to symbolise 'the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints.' The east window illustrates the living Church under the form of the True Vine, in which our Lord, as a King, is the central figure, and the branches bear His disciples and followers in all ages, special prominence being given to the saints of the Church in Northumbria. The side windows within the sanctuary show the four evangelists, and the four great fathers of the Western Church — St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and St. Gregory. One of the windows in the chancel shows the types of Christ

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in the Jewish Church—Noah, Melchisedec, Abraham, and Moses. The other window contains the prophets who foretold our Lord as the Branch—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Zechariah. On the wall of the chancel is an inscription :

'Thanking Almighty God for the example given by the life and character of Sir George Grey, Bart., who, during a long life, served his country in many high offices of State, his friends and neighbours have filled the windows of this chancel with painted glass, to his memory and the glory of God.

MDCCCLXXXIII.'

What I have written is all too slight and too imperfect to be even a faint representation of Sir George Grey's activity and goodness. My words will seem cold, addressed as they are to those who knew him longer and better than I did myself. I have but gathered together scattered facts and stray impressions. I have been checked at every moment of my

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endeavour by the recollection of words spoken to me by him on his death-bed. They are a summary of his character: 'Let nothing be said in my praise when I am gone. I would not have any one think me better than I was.'

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In Memory of the Right Honourable Sir George Grey, Bart., G.C.B.

A SERMON PREACHED IN EMBLETON CHURCH BY THE VICAR, THE REV. CANON CREIGHTON, ON DECEMBER 23, 1883.

'*The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*'
PSALM cxii. 6.

To-day we enter upon the possession of our church enriched with a new beauty. You are proud of your church, and you have good reason to be proud of it. Its massive structure tells you how, in unquiet times in this disturbed border-land, your forefathers built a building that was meant to be strong enough to resist all lawless attack. The oldest amongst you have seen that building carefully finished by the addition of a noble chancel. You may recall some acts of self-denial on your own part to contribute towards the work of making this

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place more worthy to be called the House of God. To-day you see it rendered one of the most beautiful churches in Northumberland.

To us dwellers in the country this is a consideration of much importance. Our church is the one building on which we can look with pleasure. It is our one common possession. It is the place round which centre the deepest memories of our private and domestic life. It is your one meeting place, which brings you together. Your homes are scattered; your lives are separate, and sometimes solitary. Here for a few hours each week you may feel that you are bound together as the children of a common Father. Here your united prayers and praises rise up to heaven, and you know that you are one in the Lord.

You cannot feel this too strongly; for it is one of the most powerful means of helping you in daily life to rise above self and overcome the narrowing influence of daily toil, constantly renewed and little varied. Remember that however trivial the round of daily life may

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seem to be, yet no man lives to himself. He is bound up with others. His life and character, whether he wishes it or not, are powerful for good or evil. Human society grows little by little, as this church has grown. It may be but a small contribution towards the good of man that each of us can make in his lifetime. But if we cling resolutely to a high purpose, something at all events is done for the future, and some are made better than if we had not been. There is no greater consolation to the weary than the thought of the Communion of Saints. We are not pursuing a desolate path which no man's foot has trodden before. Every step of our life's journey has been made by countless pilgrims in the past. We have to face no struggle in which thousands have not been engaged before, in which thousands by God's grace have not been conquerors. We have to encounter no trial nor temptation which has not been already encountered and overcome. We are not alone. The vast multitude of the saints beckon us to follow their example, to live and conquer in the

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strength which they found to be sufficient to arm their natural frailty for the victory.

I trust that these thoughts, this powerful consolation, may be, by God's help, more deeply fixed in your minds henceforth. They are set before your eyes in a visible shape, which I hope will, Sunday by Sunday, renew them in your memory. The windows which you see completed to-day represent the words of Christ—'I am the Vine; ye are the Branches.' From the Tree of which our glorified Redeemer is at once the root and the flower, springs the universal Church, which is represented by holy men—Apostles, Martyrs, Rulers, Preachers, Men of Learning, Founders of Churches, Missionaries—all who sought to advance the boundaries of Christ's kingdom. To bring them more home to you many of them are Northumbrian Saints, men who lived and laboured in these parts, men to whose lives and labours we owe the beginnings of Christian life in Northumberland. They are but samples of the great band of witnesses for God, who have entered into their rest. Your

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own hearts, the heart of every one, must fill up the outline that they suggest. Think, each of you, of some whom you knew in the flesh, and who have gone before you within the vail. Let all that was noble, all that was holy, all that came from God in their life and character, rise before you and strengthen you in your own endeavours.

It was with this object in view that these windows were planned for your church. It is with a fervent prayer that this expectation may be in some way fulfilled that I ask you to take possession of them to-day. Make them your own, each one of you, by resolving that they shall recall these thoughts to your minds. Set this meaning clearly before yourselves, and let it be henceforth a background to your meditations when your eyes fall upon these figures. Sights may strike your gaze and may fill you with pleasure; but the real gain to your inward self must come from the impression left, not on your senses, but on your minds. We can receive no teaching unless we bring a teachable heart. We can learn no

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lessons unless we wish to learn them. We cannot have our feelings of devotion deepened unless we long to lift up our hearts to God. You must lend yourselves to the teaching of these windows, if they are to be more to you than a mere ornament to your church.

To enable you to do so better let me recall the reason to which you owe them. They are a memorial to one whom you all knew in some degree—one whom those who had most opportunities of knowing loved and respected most. They are a gift to you from many of the best and wisest in this land, a gift to you for the sake of one whom they held dear. For his sake many who have never seen this place, who will never see these windows, have been glad to help in making your church more beautiful, more full of meaning, and therefore more useful to you. You owe it to his memory that you should not disappoint their hopes, their expectations, and their prayers.

Your church has been made richer to you. Why? Because many of the highest minds in England felt and said that their lives had been

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made richer and better to them by the memory of one who has passed away. These windows are a thank-offering to Almighty God for the example given to many by the Christian life, by the lovely character of Sir George Grey. Look upon them reverently, and, as you look, take comfort. They are a testimony to the living, acting power of the belief in the Communion of Saints.

You may remember that when Sir George Grey died, now more than a year ago, I tried to speak to you about him, but failed in my attempt. My own sense of loss was too strongly personal, and sorrow was too fresh for words. Even now I feel it very difficult, because I remember his own deep humility, and find it hard to say in simple language what I know. One of the charges which Sir George Grey gave me on his death-bed was this: 'I have chosen the inscription to be put over me when I am gone—only my name and date of birth and death. Let there be no praise of me. I would not have any one think me better than I was.' There spoke a soul which echoed the

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words of the Apostle St. Paul—'With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.' He lived unto God, and unto God he died, committing himself into the hands of a faithful Creator, with a profound belief in the sufficiency of the atoning blood of Christ.

I dare not, if I wished, speak one word in his praise. He died, as he had lived, seeking the praise of God, not the praise of men. But a good man's activity does not cease with his life: being dead he yet speaketh. The world was a better place to all who knew him, while he lived, because they knew him. The world remains to them a better place, after he is gone, because it is enriched to them by his memory. He has made more real to us all the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. He has made us more hopeful, more single-minded, more sincere in our efforts to tread the path where his track still remains before our eyes. What I say, I say not in praise of him, but for your example. Sunday after Sunday you saw that aged form,

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erect beneath the weight of years, enter this church. You heard that grave, full voice mingle with yours in prayer and praise. You saw the reverent look upon

> that beloved aged face
> To which each passing year lent a diviner grace.

I would have the recollection of that past become a memory which may help even the youngest amongst you, even those who had the least opportunities of knowing more of the example of his life.

I will not speak of the public life of Sir George Grey, nor tell you how for many years he served his country in high offices of State. Men looked up to him and trusted him because they saw that he had no thought of self, but was anxious only to do his duty. He had that wisdom which cometh from above, and is the gift of God to those who seek Him. What he did in public life was due to integrity of purpose. He tried to act in all things, great and small, according to his prayers. He prayed God to give him a right judgment in all things. He

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never spoke unadvisedly; he never was provoked; he never said a bitter word; he never imputed a bad motive to any who differed from him. He was an example of the charity which thinketh no evil; and all men in Parliament looked upon him with kindliness and respect. His advice was sought and was followed because he was always sincere, and had no purpose of his own to follow, but sought only to know what was most right. He regarded his talents as gifts of God. He lived as became a faithful steward. He was ready to do his best, honourably and uprightly, as in God's sight. He did not seek for fame, nor for man's good opinion. He strove to do what he could in his day and generation; and his wise and moderate counsels did much to secure to this country the peace and good order which we have so long enjoyed.

When the infirmities of increasing years came upon him, he left public life and settled quietly amongst you. You know how he lived; how he went about with a kindly smile upon his face, and a word of cheerful greeting for all.

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You know how simple he was, how genial, how loving. You never thought of him, when you saw him, as of a great statesman, who had spent his life in matters far beyond your knowledge. He did not speak to you as a great man, whose mind was above yours, whose thoughts were busy with great things, whose life was different from your own. He spoke to you as a friend. Your interests were his interests. Your welfare was his constant thought. Nothing that concerned your well-being was too small for his careful consideration. He rejoiced when you rejoiced. He mourned when you were afflicted. You do not know so well as I do how deeply he sympathised with your sorrows. He felt for others so keenly that their woes were a source of pain to him. He could not drive them away from his mind. He remembered, after the lapse of years, the losses, the afflictions, the bereavements of those amongst whom he dwelt. He had knelt by many a bedside, he had prayed for the consolation of many an afflicted heart.

He too himself had felt the bitter pangs of

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bereavement. He had known pain and sorrow, and had known also the source whence all consolation springs. His own grief taught him to strive more resolutely against self, and to live more entirely for the good of others. He knew that it was selfish to give way to sorrow. He knew that cheerfulness was a duty which every man owes to his fellow men. More and more, as life went on, he renewed his youth by living in the life of others. He never failed in sympathy. He never kept himself aloof from any one who needed his advice or help. He could put himself into the place of another, see with his eyes, and feel with his heart. His constant source of happiness was to see others happy and help to make them so. You never talked with him for a little while without feeling that he had no thought of himself, but was lending himself entirely to you, to your opinions, your interests, your sorrows, or your joys. You knew that he was entirely open, truthful, and sincere. He had nothing to hide. His heart was as simple and guileless as the heart of a child.

His purpose was clear; it was simply to do

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the thing that was right in God's sight. He had the blessing of the pure in heart, that he should see God. He knew that God was about his path, and about his bed, and spied out all his ways. This was the secret of his kindliness. He saw the world to be God's world and he knew that God was good. Hence he saw good in everything. I never heard him pronounce a harsh judgment or speak an unkindly word of any one. You know that he never did an unkindly or inconsiderate act. As a friend, a counsellor, a guide, he sought the welfare of others by acts of thoughtful unobtrusive kindliness. Many of you have knelt with him in prayer in his own house, when the dark winter evenings made it difficult for you to come to church. May the remembrance of that fact abide with you, and bring to your hearts the lessons which he taught.

The beauty of his character was due to the fact that his life was one consistent walk with God. From his early to his later years he never swerved from his belief. He had no time of carelessness or forgetfulness. Firmly

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and steadfastly he advanced with his face always turned heavenwards. Remember that little lapses into sin or heedlessness leave scars and marks behind. You may repent and may obtain forgiveness; but you cannot get back your sense of innocence. You may root out the sin you once encouraged; but you cannot do away with the signs of its presence in your heart. There is a special beauty, a peculiar grace, a winning sweetness which attaches to those who have been constant in their service of God. That beauty, that sweetness, was his.

You knew him best in his later years; and I wish to speak of him as he lives in your recollection. Did not the sight of him teach you always one great lesson—the value of old age? He showed you the grace that crowned a consistent life. From a mind that has always been active, a body that has always been temperate, a heart that has always been filled with the peace of God, the advance of years has nothing to take away. Increasing infirmities bring no listnessness; the prospect of death has no terror. Though old in years, Sir George Grey

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was always young in heart. He was always full of interest and of curiosity, always ready to learn. The old are often subjects of awe to the young. They seem to have their minds made up about everything; to go their own way; to take no interest in the thoughts, the feelings, the difficulties of the generations that have sprung up since they were young themselves. You know that there was no child so young but that Sir George Grey would cheerfully talk to it. There were no opinions so different from his own that he would not listen to them with a kindly smile. He never professed to the simplest or the youngest the superiority which his talents and his experience justly gave him. He met every one on the footing of an equal. When he differed from what they said, he did so gently; and only those who considered afterwards saw the kindly rebuke that sometimes lay hid beneath his simple words.

No one could see Sir George Grey without feeling that he had solved the problem of life, that he had learned both from its joys and from its sorrows; that he had laboured much, had

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suffered much, had rejoiced much; that all things had turned to him for good. He was a rare example of a happy and useful old age. I think few people ever met him for a few moments without feeling this, and finding their view of life widened in consequence of this feeling. We often say that few people think seriously of death. Perhaps still fewer think seriously of old age. But if the thought of death brings to an issue our relations towards God, the thought of old age brings to an issue our relations towards our fellow men. We know how closely these two relationships are interwoven. 'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' The Apostle exhorts us to test our sincerity towards God by our sincerity towards man.

The awfulness of death lies in the suspicion of our unreality. 'I shall stand before God,' we think, 'and what shall I be when the world, and all the things of the world, all the surroundings of my daily life, are taken away from me? What am I in myself, apart

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from them?' The thought of the coming of old age ought to help us to answer this momentous question. Let us say to ourselves, 'My bodily powers will fail; the quickness of my mind may leave me. There may come a time when I shall not be able to do my work. My activity will be at an end; my interests will have to be laid aside. There will no longer be money to be made, nor business to be managed. What shall I do then? What will be left to interest me, to occupy my thoughts?' The question is a profitable one; it is worth asking ourselves betimes.

This question was one which intercourse with Sir George Grey brought home most forcibly. He had left the pursuits of a long lifetime, and he felt no regret. He had lost his only son, on whose companionship he had counted in his declining years; he set himself to find that companionship in his grandchildren. His life was full of interests, was rich in happiness, was busied in acts of usefulness to the end. He was not dependent on outward things; he had his resources within himself.

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All spheres were alike worthy of his best care and his most earnest attention. He found in all things an opportunity for fruitful work. Why was this? Because he had always lived not to himself but for the service of God. He had grown accustomed to act solely from the sense of duty. He was no more genial, no more desirous of producing an effect, in the society of the great world, or on the floor of the House of Commons, than he was in one of your cottages. He did not consider it to be a greater thing to devise some measure for the better government of England than to discover some scheme for your greater welfare. He had learned, always, throughout his whole life,

> To have to do with nothing but the true,
> The good, the eternal—and these, not alone
> In the main current of the general life,
> But small experiences of every day
> Concerns of the particular hearth and home;
> To learn not only by the comet's rush,
> But by the roses' birth.

'He being dead yet speaketh.' Many who knew him only slightly have said to me, 'No

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one could know him without being better for it.' Those who knew him best have left a testimony of the gratitude to Almighty God for the example of his life and character. That testimony is now set daily before your eyes. It is for you to fix its meaning in your hearts and make it helpful for your souls' progress. Let it be to you a token of the eternal power of good. Let it show you that a Christian life leaves always an abiding mark, and that a Christian example is fruitful to all times. So may you see, dimly and imperfectly, how the store of good in this world is increased, and how the working of the spiritual power of light is strengthened by each generation of God's servants, until the time be come when 'the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.' So may you enjoy the inspiring thoughts that are carried into the heart that meditates on 'the Communion of Saints.'

'Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth for evermore'—liveth in the hearts that they have cheered; liveth in the souls that

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they have raised by their example; liveth, and its life is carried onward by the generations that are to be, for their seed shall remain for ever, and their glory shall not be blotted out.'

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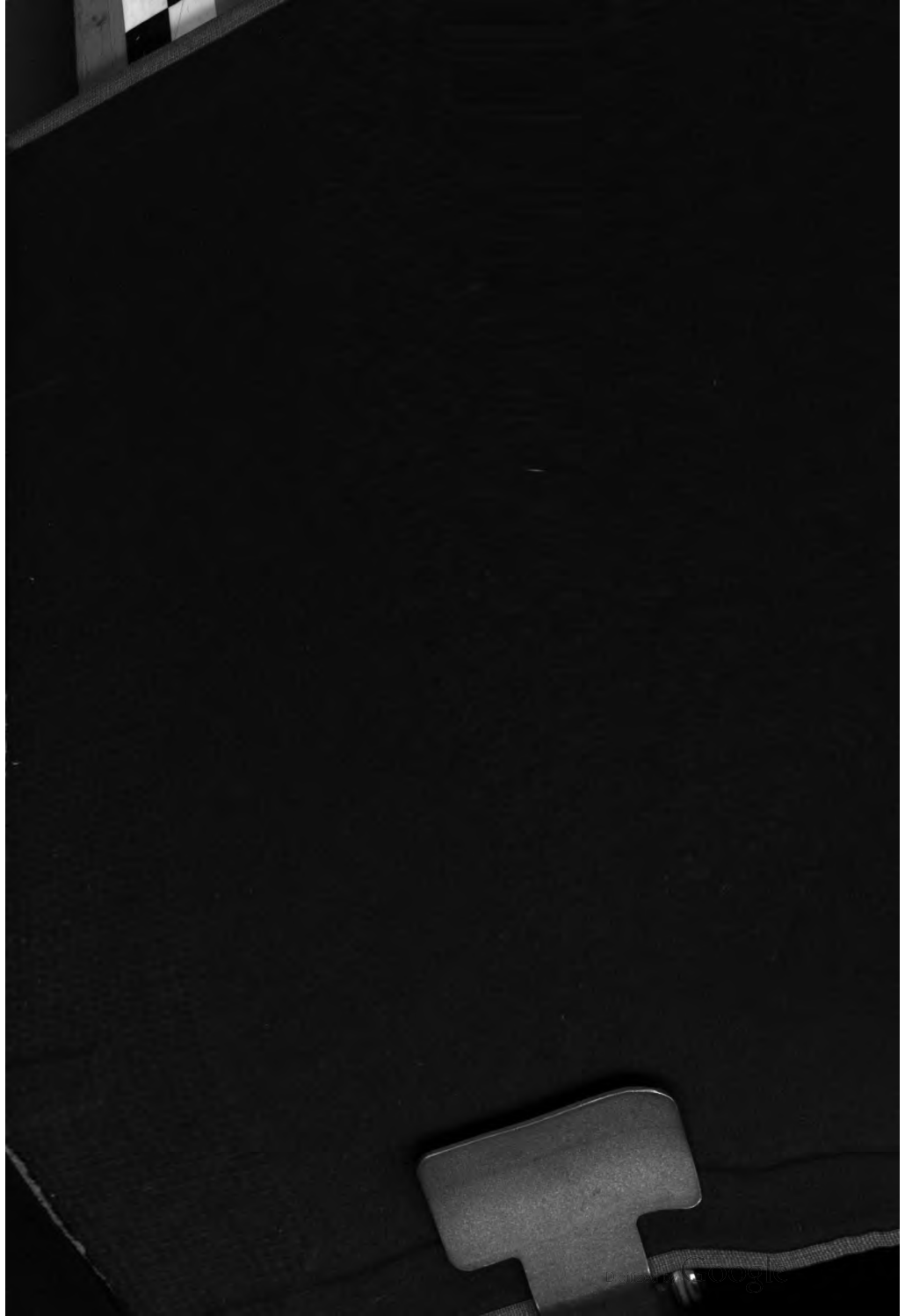

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